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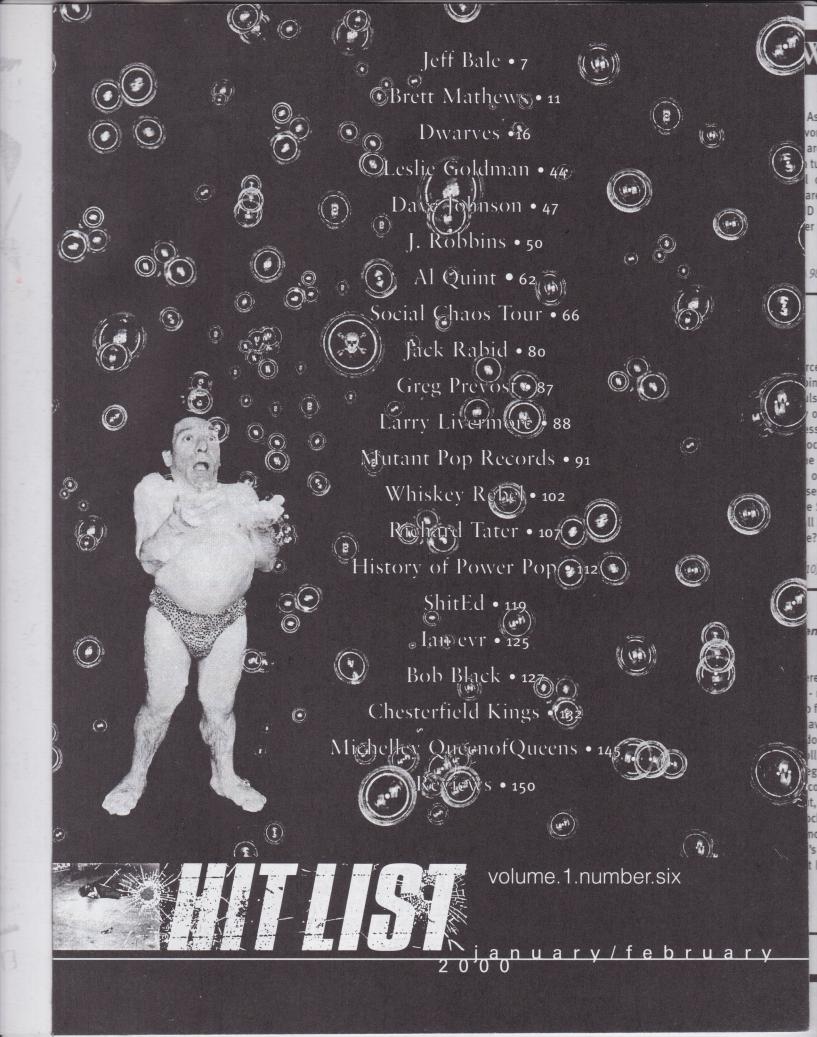


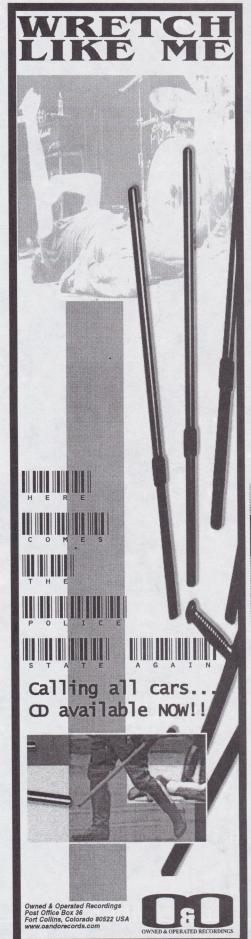
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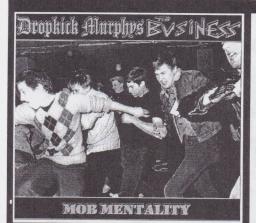
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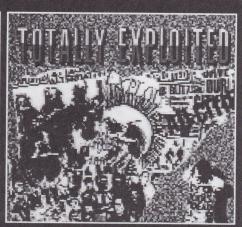
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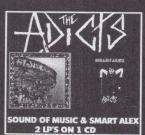


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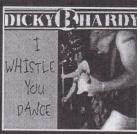
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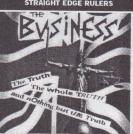


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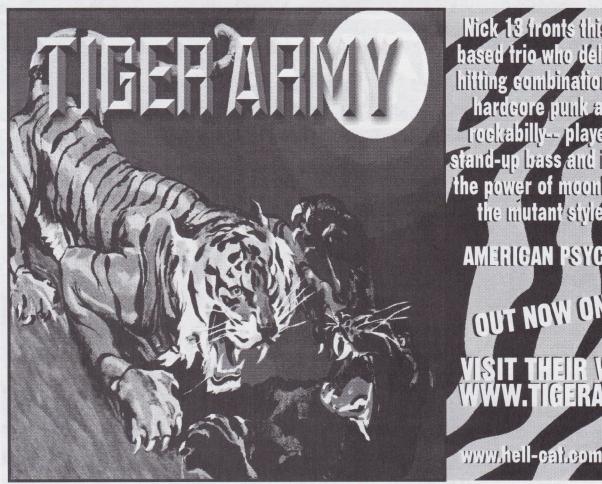


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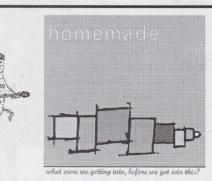






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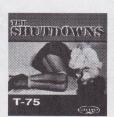
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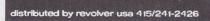






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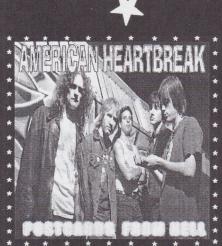
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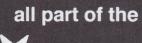
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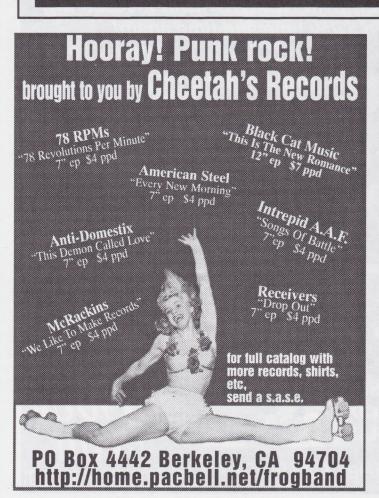
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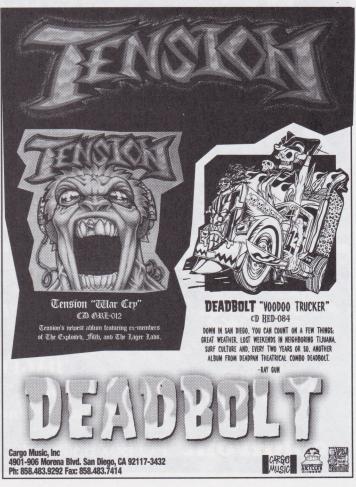
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HIT SQUAD

his time around I feel the urge, for some strange reason unbeknownst even to myself, to say a few words about a topic that at first glance seems totally trivial: youth fashions and styles. I'm not talking, of course, about the supposedly "trendy" but typically ephemeral crap that is rammed down the throats of new cohorts of students year after year by the fashion industry, which fancies itself-all too accurately-as the arbiter of taste for the sheep-like, fresh-faced masses. Instead, my focus will on innovative styles that emerge "organically" as authentic forms of expression among creative vanguards of alienated youths who, in different eras, have played seminal roles in actually creating various anti-establishment subcultures and countercultures. Unfortunately, not long after their explosive introduction, these novel and perhaps even radical styles have invariably been noticed, coopted, and commercialized by the very same fashion industry, but in this case one must distinguish between their original inherent hipness quotient and their later hopelessly "uncool" exploitation by bandwagon-jumping corporate clods who don't have the intelligence or imagination to create anything of value on their own. Let's make things a bit simpler, shall we? Beneath the above high-falutin' rhetoric, what I really want to argue is that certain styles are so aesthetically appealing that they are in some sense timeless, whereas others are inherently hideous or, at best, can only be viewed as having been "cool" in very limited historical contexts.

BeforeI enumerate the youth styles that I think always look sharp, followed by those that I think are inherently repulsive and dopey, I'd like to argue for a standard of hipness that I think should apply to all styles. Whether one is talking about clothes or hairstyles, fashions that make people look radically different than "normal" people all the time are intrinsically "cooler" and more "hip" than those that one can don and remove at will so as to permit oneself to fit into any and all workplace or social milieus. In other words, extreme hairstyles, tatoos, and piercings-however aesthetically ugly they may sometimes be (especially big clunky piercings!)-which cannot be easily covered

up or made to look normal are inherently more subversive and threatening than other styles which can be modified to allow the wearer to fit perfectly into mainstream society at a moment's notice. After all, being among the very first group of people to have really long hair, really long grizzly

that, at least not to my way of thinking.

styles. beards, really gigantic spikes, heap big mohawks, totally shaved or half-shaved heads, or really prominent tatoos invariably makes one a constant target of abuse and discriminatory behavior, not only at the hands of cops, violent jocks, frat boys, and thugs of color, but also of parents, teachers, and bosses. Adopting such fashions therefore represents a level of commitment to one's ideals, rebelliousness, anger, or desires for creative expression-assuming it's not a mere reflection of masochism-that the average person simply doesn't possess. In contrast, any jock with well-groomed short hair can decide to put on some hair gel, torn-up clothes, boots, or braces and pretend to be a "punk" or "skin" for one

So what styles are timeless and aesthetically and culturally hip?

night, then go back to wearing normal clothes and fitting in the very

next day. There's certainly nothing "radical" or courageous about

1) the rockabilly "greaser" look-slicked-back pompadours, tight peglegged pants, creepers or pointy-towed shoes, leather jackets, t-shirts, and shirts with rolled-up sleeves

2) the "modish" British Invasion look-longish bowl-cut hair (which was really long for the time), tight peglegged pants, pointy-towed boots, mid-length contoured jackets

3) the 60's punk look-much longer bowl-cut hair (which was really long for the time), tight peglegged pants, pointy-towed boots, vests, suede jackets, dark colors, facial snarls

4) the "early" hippy look-really long, wild-looking hair, tight peglegged pants or tight pants with tiny bellbottoms (both with lots of rips and tears), denim or suede jackets (maybe...yuk...with fringes), dark or colorful shirts, funky-ass circus hats, lots of accessories

5) the "glam" rock look-really long or slightly contoured teased hair (forget about those horrible "shags"), tight pants, colorful

JEFF BALE READBETWEENTHELINES

shirts, women's scarves, make-up, boots with platform heels, pouty, androgynous smirks

6) the 1977 punk look-spikey hair, torn-up clothes (perhaps patched together with safety pins), buttons and ornaments galore, black leather jackets, tight peglegged or zippered bondage pants, make-up, boots or pointy-towed shoes, dark colors, menacing sneers

7) the 1980 punk look-really big hair spikes or mohawks, black leather jackets, buttons and ornaments galore, Doc Martin boots, military-style shirts and trousers, dark colors, perpetual scowls or contorted "yobbo" facial expressions

8) the Goth look-teased and I'd like to argue for a stanoften very long black hair, pale skin, tight peglegged dard of hipness that I pants, black velvet jackets, black shirts, black make-up, black dresses, black shoes, think should apply to all black souls, neurotic facial expressions 9) the "street" metal look-really

long hair, tight peglegged pants,

flannel or denim shirts, black leather jackets with logos, buttons, boots or casual shoes, general "dude"-dom

These looks were all considered very extreme in their day, and anyone sporting them was almost guaranteed to be regularly subjected (by squares) to all sorts of abuse, including verbal insults, aggro, beatings, and general harassment. (Let me clue you in on a little secret, though-what made all this abuse bearable was the fact that the hottest and most interesting babes always ended up being attracted to you. When the "bad" girls want to take you home and show you a good time, you don't really give two shits about what the stupid simian males think, you know?) But unlike so many other misguided fashion statements, these particular "looks" have stood the test of time and remained cool to this very day, so much so that perennial rebels tend to frequently shift back and forth between them.

There are several other styles that can at times look pretty sharp, although I personally wouldn't put them in either the "hippest" or the "most uncool" categories, Among these one may mention the skinhead look, the scary "black metal" look, the psychobilly look, and the

HIT SQUAD



biker look. I'm sure there are others as well, but at the moment I can't seem to recall any of them.

Now let's move on to the very worst styles in the youth fashion parade, shall we?

1) the "late" hippy look-long hair (now passe), the wrong sort of facial hair, big ugly bellbottoms, frilly flowered shirts with flower patches, love beads, tie-dyed t-shirts, moccasins, patchouli oil, bovine facial expressions

2) the "disco" look-feathered hair, leisure suits, big bellbottoms, garish satin shirts, patent leather shoes, cologne, pastel colors, "wise guy" grimaces

3) the "beach punk" look-bleached hair, baggy shorts, Hawaiian

shirts, backwards baseball caps, sandals, skateboards, mai tais, bongs, vacant expressions

4) the "emo" look-nondescript hair, nondescript clothes, hush puppies, tiny backpacks with stupid political slogans, mineral water, tofu snacks, constant handwringing, pained expressions

5) the (wannabe) gangster hip-hop look-phony "African" hairstyles or shaved heads, loose-fitting irridescent athletic

clothes, gaudy gold jewelry, sideways baseball caps with the price tag still attached, NOI and Malcolm X badges, banana boat athletic shoes, big big big big baggy-ass pants, "yo's" galore (you know what I'm sayin'?), gang hand-signals, crack pipes, moronic sneers.

All of these styles are absolutely hideous-always were, always will be. Of course, honorable mentions could be given to a host of other embarassingly ugly styles, such as New Wave, New Romantic, Ant People, and the "Club Kid" rave look of today. And, of course, the less said about neo-Swing and neo-Lounge fashions, the better.

Still, the absolute nadir of the past 50 years' worth of butt-ugly

youth fashions is undoubtedly the gangster hip-hop look. When someone wears that type of garish garb, they're basically conveying the following message to the rest of the world: "I'm a misogynistic, racist moron with an IQ of 50, the moral character of a violent sociopath, and the fashion sense of a pimp...you know what I'm sayin'? Word!" And if they wear that shit and happen to be white, they're basically saying "I desperately wannabe a black misogynistic, racist moron with an IQ of 50, the moral character of a violent sociopath, and the fashion sense of a pimp. I'm so totally lame that I can't even fit into my own sociopathic underclass white culture, so I have to ape the worst features of a sociopathic underclass black culture that is utterly alien to my own...you know what I'm sayin'? Word!" In fact, the only time I've ever found myself in agreement with a neo-Nazi skinhead band was when I heard the song lyrics to "White Nigger" by the PEOPLE HATERS (on the "Blood & Honour, volume 1" compilation CD): "You're a white nigger, a white nigger, a white nigger, gonna pull the trigger...on a white nigger/What you need is a bullet in your head". I guess that is a bit extreme, now that I think about it, but even so there are very few things that are more pathetic than a dopey honky "homeboy" who's desperately trying to look and act like a pathological black "bru-tha". Axe me no questions, and I'll tell you no lies.

To sum up, it turns out that there are a couple of basic lessons that emerge from our brief survey of youth fashions. One is that long hair, whether it hangs down or stands straight up, is generally way cooler than short hair (excepting mullets, which combine the worst aspects of both). After all, any old square can live a boring and uneventful life sporting short hair and never ruffle anyone's feathers, and indeed millions of squares do just that. Another lesson is that tight pants are inestimably hipper than baggy pants (unless you're overweight!). In this context I completely agree with Felix Havoc, who once suggest-

ed in an old *MRR* column that anyone caught wearing big big big big baggy-ass pants should be immediately banished-in perpetuity-from the punk scene. To which I would only add, *after* being tarred and feathered.

I realize that all opinions about fashion and style are utterly subjective, and consequently it's not something that I've ever really given much thought to. When I was younger and better looking, I just sort of unconsciously ended up adopting various sharp styles, and for-

tunately I looked much younger than I actually was for the better part of my life. In recent years, sadly, I've finally started to look my age-middle-aged, that is (yuk)-so it's getting harder and harder for me to look "hip". But that doesn't mean I can't recognize it when other people do...or don't. And let's face facts, most people do not.

Long hair, whether it hangs down or stands straight up, is generally way cooler than short hair (excepting mullets, which combine the worst aspects of both).

FOR THOSE ABOUT TO PUNK OUT, I SALUTE YOU

Ah, the new millenium (even though, technically, it doesn't actually begin until 1 January 2001)! What a great time to be alive! That may sound a bit strange coming from the pen of a cynical, jaded boho like me, especially one who has been going through some painful personal and professional adjustments during the past few years. But in at least one respect it's true. No, I'm not suggesting that the problems of war, social strife, overpopulation, environmental degradation, pestilence, and human stupidity-the root of all the others-are about to be miraculously solved. What I am saying is that now is a great time to be alive if you're a record collector. Why? Because for the first time ever, it's now possible to acquire the bulk of the rarest (and the not-so-rare) musical products from every past era since the invention of sound recording. It doesn't matter what type of music one happens to be addicted to-jazz, blues, swing, rock 'n' roll, soul, crooners, showtunes, whatever-because almost everything is gradually being reissued, often in digitally-remastered formats that sound better than the originals. Moreover, no one besides the obscenely wealthy or the overly zealous has to bother paying enormous sums to acquire the original versions any longer, since they're almost all available on much cheaper CD or vinyl collections.

I myself am taking full advantage of these developments to replace virtually my entire record collection, a task which is now almost complete. To some extent I'm simply making a virtue out of necessity, since I've been compelled by circumstances to unload my collection of punk rock records. It turns out, however, that I couldn't have picked a better time to do so. 90% of the good p-rock records have already been reissued, often in "expanded" versions, i.e., with bonus CD tracks not on the original releases, or on various compilations such as "Back to Front", "Bloodstains", "Break the Rules", "Feel Lucky, Punk?", "Hate Your Neighbors", "Killed By Death", "Murder Punk", "Power Pearls", and the list goes on and on. Several years ago the thought of replacing my 7" and 12" records with soul-less CDs would have been positively anathema, and in certain ways vinyl

remains a much more aesthetically satisfying format even today. But during the intervening years sound engineers finally managed to master the subtle art of transferring music from older analog formats to digital formats, and new technological innovations have now made it possible to obtain a sound quality that is far better than the one found on the original vinyl versions of most records (even if these have been preserved in mint condition). I'm sure that some of you "collector scum" out there are already becoming increasingly restive, if not apoplectic, but what I'm saying nonetheless happens to be true. I challenge anyone out there to listen to the remastered versions of albums by the WHO, the

BYRDS, and RADIO BIRDMAN, then to go back and listen to the original vinyl versions, and then to honestly tell me that the latter sound better. If you insist on making such a blatantly ridiculous claim you're probably lying, in which case an aural test should be administered to you forthwith while you're blindfolded. In the final analysis the original Luddites were backwards-looking reactionaries, just as the neo-Luddite "deep ecology" fanatics and vinyl purists are today, so there's no reason for any intelligent person to continue denying reality.

I don't really mean to insult all you vinyl junkies, because not so long ago I myself was standing right in the midst of your dishevelled ranks. Initially, there were good reasons to do so, since the convenience of storing and playing CDs by no means compensated for their exorbitant price and artificially-separated and often tinny sound. It used to be the case that the mid-range fell out completely in digital recordings, something which tended to emasculate tough-sounding rock 'n' roll, leaving the listener with a loud bass (which was a good thing) and an overly piercing treble (which wasn't). Overall the sound was kind of high-pitched and weedy, and it lacked that warm feeling which analog recordings have always been known for. About ten years ago, however, all of this changed. Engineers had by then mastered the secrets of the transfer process, and CD's actually began to sound significantly better than vinyl records. Not only was their sound itself becoming increasingly clearer and fuller, but CDs also lacked the annoying skips, pops, clicks, and sonic distortions that are inevitably present with vinyl. More recently, with the introduction of 24-bit remastering, the sound on CDs has-to put it simply-become

JEFFBALE

vastly superior to that of analog recordings, even those pressed on the highest-quality vinyl. The proof is in the pudding, and it is no longer possible to claim, with any degree of accuracy, that old records sound better than these newly-remastered CDs.

However, even though it's a fabulous time to be alive if you're a serious record collector, not everything crucial has yet been reissued. We've all become accustomed to the excellent sonic recovery work carried out by cool punk labels like Captain Oi, Overground, and Get Back, to name only three, but why the hell hasn't anyone reissued expanded CDs with bonus tracks by the (LEYTON) BUZZARDS (their

> LP, which contains all their 7"ers), the CORTINAS (their LP Even more astoundingly, why records I'd like to see reissued,

plus their first two 7"ers), or the JOLT, the greatest of the late 70's UK neo-Mod bands (their first LP, plus their first three 7"ers)? And even though I've never been much of a fan of theirs, why hasn't the STRANGLERS' "Rattus Norvegicus" LP been reissued, along with bonus singles tracks? hasn't some enterprising soul reissued (and remastered) the second VIBRATORS LP, the first two ALICE COOPER LPs, the first RED CROSS 12" (plus unreleased stuff?), the first two DICKIES LPs, and the RICH KIDS LP? All of these records would sell like hotcakes if someone had enough sense (or legal clout) to get their hands on the master tapes. There's also assorted other

such as the CLEAR LIGHT LP (plus bonus tracks from the soundtrack of the spy spoof starring James Coburn, "The President's Analyst"). This sounds like a job for Edsel, or perhaps Sundazed. In other words, much still remains to be done, so get with it, people!

NEWS

I challenge anyone out there

to listen to the remastered

versions of albums by the

WHO, the BYRDS, and RADIO

BIRDMAN, then to go back

and listen to the original

vinyl versions, and then to

honestly tell me that the

latter sound better.

We had originally planned to print a eulogy section for Claude Bessy in this issue of Hit List, but have decided to postpone it until we can acquire some additional contributions. Rest assured, however, that we will publish such a piece within the next issue or two.

Once again, I'm very pleased to announce that our roster of talented contributors is continuing to grow (which is probably just as well, since certain HL veterans have been flaking out on us lately!). Among these underground luminaries are Greg Prevost of the CHESTERFIELD KINGS; Jeff Jarema (editor of the great but sadly defunct 60's zine Here 'Tis and a writer for many other cool music publications); Josh Rutledge (editor of the highly literate and wellinformed pop-oriented magazine Now Wave); and Chad Hensley (editor of the fascinating countercultural occultist publication EsoTerra). We hope to be adding eccentric genius Falling James of the LEAVING TRAINS and Tim Mutant Pop to our lineup in the near future, as well as some other notorious provocateurs who I'm not yet at liberty to name. One thing you can be sure of, however, is that they will not mince words. As we like to say, spare the (metaphoric) rod and spoil

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HIT SQUAD

Fed Up, Bringin' It Down, No Apologies (I know that at least one person will get this reference)

think that most readers of Hit List will be able to follow me on this one, as our magazine caters to people who have a great love and understanding for rock 'n' roll music. We go out of our way to cover the sort of heavy, aggressive music that tends to appeal to a sect of people who are quite passionate about their tastes in music. I myself love music more than anything else in the world. I can't tell you how satisfying it is to put out a magazine that actually seems like it's making a difference and filling a void in a scene that has always meant so much to me. I can't explain the feeling I get by putting out some amazing punk record that might not have ever come out otherwise, and not caring whether it only sells three hundred copies since I know that at least three hundred other people will have an opportunity to "get" what I "got" when I first heard it. Despite these positive feelings, there is naturally a down side in addition to vulgar commercialism: scene politics. Granted, there haven't been any scene-oriented assasinations and no churches have been lit up like Roman candles, but the politics of punk rock have to rank next to the low level of black metal politics in the coolness department. It's something that most people never even think about unless they happen to be watching MTV and hear a story about some big record label giving the singer of some band a corporate title or his own record label in order to keep his shitty fucking band on their label for another year - you know, before their crappy style of music ceases to be all the "rage". That's when I say to myself, "well, that's why I'm into punk, because stuff like that would never fly in the underground". I've gotta be kidding myself.

Some Records is the label that put out the new HOT WATER MUSIC full-length. I feel that HWM is quite possibly the best band going today, and supported them long before Some had ever even heard of them (or maybe set in a differen light, before they had heard about the hype surrounding them and their ability to sell records to an established, faithful fan base). After hearing about this signing, I immediately contacted Some, told the guy I was talking to about our magazine, and said that I would love to do anything I could to help support HWM. He couldn't have given two shits about my offer, told me to send a "media package" to their advertising department — media package? You gotta be joking — and got off the phone as soon as possible. I didn't expect to get any special treatment; some common decency would have been sufficient, but this was what I was left with. After the record came out, Some decided to take out an ad in our "little rag". In that particular issue, the HWM release and another Some release both got great reviews. Why? Because they deserved them. For the next issue, Some sent us another ad and a few more records to review. We listened to those records, got rid of a couple that were obviously aiming for radio stardom (in my opinion, Some mainly puts out these types of commercial releases, which at first surprised and disappointed me since they had previously released a few HWM-sounding records), and parcelled out the few that were left to people we thought would be best able to evaluate them. Dave Johnson, our graphics guru, also shares my love for HWM, and he had been checking out the Some web page. One of their releases, the 6 GOING ON 7 record, sparked his interest since it was described on their web page as "the [SLAYER's] 'Reign In Blood' of emo". I can understand why both aspects of this grabbed Dave's attention, since he worships at SLAYER's altar and also likes to wear little backpacks to gigs. (By the way, when I myself looked over the Some web page, I also read the description of the 6 GOING ON 7 record, but the part of it that really grabbed my attention was the phrase "songs that your girlfriend will like" — not songs that you AND your girlfriend will like, mind you, just songs that your girlfriend will like. Personally, I don't give a shit about PC crap, and most of the statements that might cause other magazines to blacklist people or labels for life don't even phase me, but this phrase even offended me a bit.

So let's get quite un-PC here for a moment. What that



phrase meant to me was that 6 GOING ON 7 was a "pussy emo record". Maybe the people at Some Records didn't bother to read the sign by the door, but Hit List is a FUCKING ROCK AND ROLL MAGAZINE. (In fact, if it were up to Herr Doktor Bale, we wouldn't even be reviewing emo records, but I'm a little more open-minded than he is about these "new school" punk genres.) So my question is, why the fuck did Some even bother to send us something to review that was so alien to the spirit of rock and roll? Did they also send copies to Vibe or the Country Music Times? Somehow I doubt it. Before I pawned this record off on Dave — the only person on our staff who might have liked it - I listened to it myself, as I do with all the records that pass through our PO Box. Dave asked me what I thought of it, and I said it seemed like it would make other "radio" bands like BUSH or LIVE seem good, if you can imagine that. This was my honest opinion, but Dave and I usually differ about music at this end of the spectrum. So Dave reviewed it and gave it a negative review, one which I personally thought was much too kind. He indicated that the record "wouldn't appeal to anyone who reads this magazine," which should have been self-evident to anyone with half a brain. Shortly after the issue came out, I got a call from Anna at Some Records, a very cool person - one of the coolest people I talk to on a regular basis — who had luckily replaced the lame guy I previously dealt with there. [Attn Matt: it's only for Anna's sake that I'm not making this a bigger deal than I actually am.] She informed me that Matt, formerly the bass player of NY hardcore band JUDGE and now part owner of Some Records, was all pissed off because one of his records had gotten a bad review in Hit List. Then I heard someone in the background saying "Is that them?" and Anna told me that Matt wanted to talk to me.

At that point Matt got on the phone and started yelling at me. He said that he couldn't believe how unprofessional we were, and how fucked we were because we ran a negative review about one of his bands. His feeling was that if we didn't like the record, we

HIT SQUAD



should have just passed on it. Was this guy fucking joking? Did he think that we operated like *Rolling Stone* or some star-fucking, payola-based zine like that? Obviously, this guy had never even seen our magazine before. If he had, he might have noticed that lots of stuff on my own record label has gotten trashed much worse than anything on the Some label! It's called a "record review section". People send in their records for review, and we review them in accordance with our own tastes. If we only printed positive reviews, we'd have to fill the second half of the first page of the review section with an ad, because that's all the reviews we'd have!

After getting a belligerent earful about how "unprofessional" we were, I got off the phone with him. About an hour later I checked my e-mail, and — you'll love this part — ran across an letter from Some. Some Records not only asked us to pull the new ad that they had recently sent in (which I'd already done without any prompting some 30 seconds after getting off. the phone with Matt), but also to refund the money they had previously sent us to pay for Some ads we had already run! I began to suspect that I was in a particu-

larly surreal episode of the "Twilight Zone". The previous Some ads had publicized HWM releases, but that's beside the point. Since when has taking out ads in a punk rock magazine guaranteed the advertiser a good review? Has payola, even on this pettiest of scales, finally been institutionalized within the underground? Maybe that's what some other "underground" zines do (though I doubt it), but you can bet your ass that's not going to happen in Hit List. Our review section is intended to be a guide for serious record collectors, not a commercial vehicle to sell records and generate profits for labels, even though we're happy if we can increase the sales of

I actually did have a copy of the [Misfits] record, but I couldn't think of a nice way to say it was the biggest piece of shit I had ever heard, so I ended up just feigning ignorance.

worthy records. If this seems to be a foreign concept to you, what the fuck are you doing in punk anyway? If you want to get good reviews, put out better records. Don't get mad at me if you put out a shitty record and the reviewer calls you on it. Memo to Matt: I'm going to try your logic on for size here — That last JUDGE record sucked. I want my money back for *every JUDGE* record I ever bought. And since the GORILLA BISCUITS 7" that you played bass on was also terrible, you might as well send the money I spent on that one back, too. Un-fucking believable! I for one hope that HWM ends up back on a true punk label like No Idea by the time of they put out their next record.

Would you believe that this type of shit happens every day? For example, after essentially grovelling in front of the MISFITS' management company so as to obtain a half hour interview at

one of their upcoming shows — we were hoping to pick up some additional information that we could incorporate into a MISFITS article that was already in the process of being written — at the last minute the arrangement was cancelled when their management found out that we didn't have their new album and that this release wasn't going to be the focus of our article. You've gotta be joking. I actually *did* have a copy of the record, but I couldn't think of a nice way to say it was the biggest piece of shit I had ever heard, so I ended up just feigning ignorance. Once again things turned out all right in the end, as the MISFITS expert who was finishing the article for us attended their show and thought that it was one of the biggest embarrassments he had ever witnessed. He didn't really have to tell me that, though, because I was there too and liked it about *half* that much.

On a more personal note, such politics hit home hardest when they adversely affect my feelings about the music that I love. This might seem extremely backwards to most of you, but I actually miss taking in a show as a normal music fan; or going into a record store and buying a new record, taking it home, and throwing it on the turntable just for fun; or looking through the record review sections of fanzines for an opinion on a record that might

turn me on to a new favorite - or seeing what someone's political viewpoint is, depending on the fanzine! Sometimes it scares the shit out of me when I actually meet people who I've always looked up to because of the bands that they have been in or the music they've created. I'm not intimidated by them because of their "celebrity" status, but I'm afraid to discover what kind of person they might turn out to be. Imagine listening to and being inspired by a band for ten years, then meeting a key member of that band at one of their shows and discovering that's an egotistical asshole who yells at his bandmates and at people working at the club. Will that great record ever sound the same again? It might not matter to some people, but sincerity means a lot to me, and these kinds of experiences

tend to tint the way I listen to records. There are lots of records that were once numbered among my favorites, but when I pull them out to listen to them these days, the only thing that comes to mind are the negative experiences I've had with particular band members or their PR flacks, leaving me with a lessened desire to actually put the disc on. So do you just avoid these encounters at all costs? Kinda hard when you're doing a record label and a magazine. Do you try to convince yourself that you don't care? Yeah right.

Here's a recent experience, though, of a completely different color. I was at the C&W Saloon (the greatest rock and roll bar this side of the Mississippi), across town from where the BUZZCOCKS and DOWN BY LAW were playing. I had just finished watching the CANDY SNATCHERS (I have a feeling that my column is

already too long, or I would take this opportunity to spend another page or two telling you what you hopefully already know, that the CANDY SNATCHERS are the shit! They make amazing records, and they rock the fuck out live. If you've missed out on either aspect of this band, you should rectify this immediately) when Mike and Eric M. (of NOFX) came strolling in with Dave Smalley. Dave Fucking Smalley. You know, Dave "You might remember me from brilliant bands such as D.Y.S., DAG NASTY,



WIG OUT AT THE CW SALOON: Dave Smalley — down and out in San Francisco (he must be to be hangin' out with this character...)

ALL, or DOWN BY LAW" Smalley (by the way, I inserted this particular middle name, since I soon learned that Dave would never say anything even remotely egotistical about himself). By the time they arrived, it was like 2 AM. The bar was closed, and only a handful of people were standing around. Fat Mike (farthest thing from a guy with a "rock star" mentality that you'll ever meet) came over and blurted out his typical, "hey, what's up?". I was briefly introduced to Dave Smalley and was quite happy at this point, which is usually a great place to leave things. After shooting the shit with the CANDY SNATCHERS for a little while longer, I said goodbye to everyone and headed out the door. Who turned out to be standing in the middle of the street, wondering where everybody went, but Dave Smalley? Apparently he and Mike had crossed wires, and Mike had taken off. Dave, who needed to rejoin the rest of his band across town, immediately asked about public transportation. Yeah, right. I'm gonna put Dave Smalley on a fucking bus. So we pile into my vehicle and head across town. I can't even begin to explain how refreshing it was to meet such a nice, humble, sincere, and almost bashful guy; someone who had meant a lot to me for the better part of my last 10 years. When we got to the Fillmore, and learned that his band had already split, we drove around SF hoping to somehow stumble across their hotel. I was hoping that we'd never find it; I probably could have asked that guy questions for days. But within the hour Dave Smalley was reunited with his band, and I felt a little better about people in the music scene.

I wish I could tell you that these inspiring encounters outweighed the bad ones, but that would be a HUGE lie. Most people suck, and that's true within the underground music biz as well. I'm not about to break out a violin and play "woe is me", since being involved in a scene that you love is great, but at what cost? You see things that you can't unsee, and learn things that you can't unlearn. It's definitely a different world from this side of the fence.

BRETTMATHEWS

FUCK THE ADULTS, FUCK THE ADULTS, FUCK THE ADULTS!

I'm pretty sure that our art director (Wow...that makes us sound official - it's definitely way more official than calling him what he really is...1/3 of our entire staff!) Dave Johnson will undoubtedly be convinced that I included the whole Dave Smalley story just so I'd have an excuse to run what has become one of our favorite punk rock pictures herein. The picture on the next page of Dave Smalley and the way-too-excited-to-be-there Jonathan Anastas rocking out symbolizes a lot to me — youth, rebellion, anger, fun, and above all punk rock. This is a picture of D.Y.S. taken around 1982, an era that I have talked about before in my columns, especially about its timeless music and unequalled sound. Today things are very different, and I believe that the main reason why this is true is that there are very few punks around and way too many people trying to play "punk music". When was the last time you actually saw a band of pre-15 year old kids get up on stage and rock out? Check out some of the books dealing with the late 70's and early 80's punk scenes, like Banned In DC or Hardcore California. They are packed full of people like that, not to mention many other images that you never see anymore. It's just too damn easy to be a "punk" these days. For example, I feel certain that all 14,000 little kids at the BLINK-182 show the other night thought that they were pretty "punk". But frankly it's hard to put up with some kid wearing his hat on backwards and baggy jeans (that look like a damn dress) get up onstage at Gilman Street and try to pawn off his band's rehashed "I wanna be BLINK-182" (what a depressing goal!) shit off as punk, just because he thinks it's the "cool" new thing. Fact is, it's far from new - look at all the fucking geriatric geezers writing for this magazine - and hopefully it won't be considered "cool" for much longer either. I'm not saying that you have to go out and try to break laws and rules to try to out-Punk someone else, but you should at least do what you think is right for you, no matter what others may think of you. I saw a band the other night that may have been the worst band I've ever heard, but I can't tell you how cool it was to watch them play. They were punk! They didn't give a shit what anyone thought about them, especially me, and they went out and rocked like there was no tomorrow. They sounded like they could have been an early 80's SF punk band - far from refined, on the edge of being out of control, and loving every minute of it. Unfortunately the sound of the bands before and after them reminded me of what era I was actually in. It was a shame to come back.

SHIZNACK

Kudos to *Punk Planet* on their new look. It's a familiar look, but I just can't quite remember where I've seen it before. Also, props to Jeff Ott for securing his place in hell. After all the shit he's done over the last decade, this move tops 'em all. How dare THIRTEEN...or...FIFTEEN or whatever the hell they're called ruin JAWBREAKER's "Caroline" on the "Later That Same Year" comp? Not only was this version bad, but the only way it could've been worse is if he'd sung the verses and choruses alternately in French and Arabic. After perfecting the art of ruining your own band's songs did you get bored and decide to ruin other people's? Get a life — or better yet, get back in your tour van and drive around telling people they should only ride bikes, because driving is oh-so terrible. Duh.

MISSING: Four hillbilly folk rockers, one impressive guitar sound,

HIT SQUAD BAND MEMBERS FLIP COIN FOR GIRL. SINGER LOSES, BASSIST WINS: Dave Smalley in *slightly* younger days.

and a huge set of balls. Where can you go from there? Let's start with the hillbillies. America's favorite punk band AVAIL have been missing since the beginning of 1998, when they dropped a bomb on the world called "Over The James". There have been a few sightings since then, most notably a couple of so-so tracks on two Fat comps and, of all things, a cover of MOTORHEAD's "Iron Fist" on a new metal covers comp, but this is not satisfactory to me. I want my rock and I want it now, dammit! Rumor has it that long time drummer Erik has moved on to focus on his other band, ALABAMA THUNDERPUSSY, but AVAIL already has a new drummer. So what's the fucking hold-up? Hopefully, there will be a sighting of a more substantial kind in the near future.

Who snuck in in the middle of the night and stole NO USE FOR A NAME's guitar sound? Maybe it was the same person who stole

SNAPCASE's balls right before they went into the studio to record their new album (now you know why my column is called "Making Friends". How am I doing so far?). The thing that was always so cool about NUFAN was their huge dual guitar sound. Even the on where they seemed to be relying on that generic drum beat that I can't stand, the big guitar sound was always enough to keep

attention. Unfortunately, they chose the guy responsible for mixing such records as the last RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE LP to mix their new slab of vinyl, and the results are less than impressive. To me, Tony Sly is an amazing writer/vocalist, Rory is one of the most talented drummers around, Matt is a musical genius, and Chris Shifflett, well, I guess that he's an "OK" guitarist. What I'm trying to say is someone better call 911, cuz we've been ROBBED! And who made SNAPCASE so un-angry? That was really fucked up. Why not leave 'em alone? If they want to be angry, let 'em be angry! Their new album, "Songs For Automation", is more along the lines of this "new metal" shit that MTV seems to be shoveling down the throats of America's youth, instead of their brilliant "Progression Through Unlearning" record released a couple years ago. I'm glad to see any band progress, and if this is actually the direction they want to be moving in then I'm happy for them (as if they care). I only bring up these points because these are a couple of bands whose records have given me great pleasure in the past, and I don't see their new records

Speaking of great records, has anyone else flipped over this AMERICAN STEEL? Don't worry, you will. Imagine if CRIMPSHRINE were more in control of what they were doing (and less lame with what they were saying), or if PINHEAD GUNPOWDER were not quite as poppy and polished. Fuck the description, just go out and buy it. It's on Lookout and it really smokes. I think it is destined to be a record that will be purchased by future generations, like those of OP IVY and the DEAD KENNEDYS...I just hope that they don't

falling into the same sublime category for me in the near future.

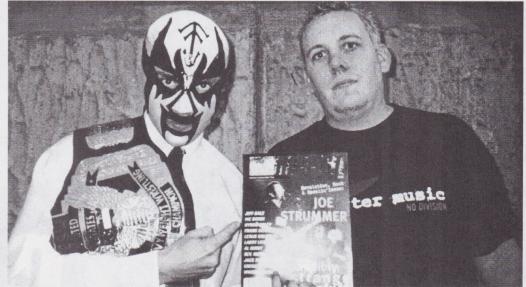
BRETTMATHEWS

have to wait until after they break up to get the recognition that they deserve.

Also check out the new DWARVES record — if the article in this issue of *Hit List* doesn't scare you too much. It contains all of the best parts of everything that they have ever done, with a little techno thrown in for good measure. It looks like someone learned how to use ProTools! This could be their best record ever, and that's saying a lot.

Is anybody out there in the mood for a brilliant record? Then check out the new NOFX EP. Yes, NOFX. I think that Mike might have enjoyed the SUBHUMANS' "From The Cradle To The Grave" a little bit too much. This new EP offers up one track that clocks in at

just over 18 minutes. Fuck yes! This is brilliant. not only breaks the mold of the standard "NOFX sound" that people always refer to, but pretty much every other formula for songwriting that has ever been used. I'm curious to see how this sells and is received by their fans, as this CD is definitely not something that "Tad" and "Biff" this instance, Tad and Biff will rep-



WRESTLEMANIA EAST BAY!: Flaco Loco pledges his allegiance; manages to steal Brett's belt in the process. Brett subsequently loses pants, says "Dammit! I need *more* pix of myself in my column so I can grab La Vella's Most Pictures of Oneself In A Given Column title."

resent all the fratboy pieces of shit who tend to make most NOFX shows these days a nightmare — will want to climb up into their jacked-up Toyota 4Runner and listen to. Their attention spans, like their penises, are much too short, and they will likely be unwilling to accept something as different as this. If I wore a hat, it would be off to NOFX right now. Bravo.

Other good things include KID DYNAMITE's new full-length; Todd from Flipside asking HOT WATER MUSIC the timeless question, "Why aren't PEGBOY more popular?"; the rare tracks and b-sides compilation CDs that are being released in March by two of my favorite bands, JAWBREAKER and HOT WATER MUSIC; the TRA-VOLTAS taking the pop-punk world by storm with their RAMONESmeets-the BEACH BOYS brilliance; HAGFISH reuniting; DANZIG cancelling his show in SF for fear of getting blown off the stage by A.F.I.; EL Flaco Loco being rumored to be teaming up with the retard that he was beer-bonging tequila into on page 30 of the last issue of Hit List; six NAKED RAYGUN reissue CDs (I'll get more into that next issue); and, last but certainly not least, Hit List emerging from its first year of publication like achampion, having 1) surpassed all the goals we had set for it, 2) attracted the right sort of readers (though perhaps not yet enough of them), 3) pissed off the idiots we were hoping to annoy, and 4) improved with each issue. I feel that this is due not only to the triumvirate that makes up our hard-working staff, but also to the many talented people who have unselfishly contributed to our publication over the course of the last year. Much thanks to everyone, and long live the true music lover.

Famous MONSTERS: The Legend of the DWARVES



TOO DRUNK TO FUCK? NOT ON YOUR LIFE!: Vadge Moore, Hewhocannotbenamed and Blag Dahlia rock out with both their proverbial and literal cocks out. Portland, 1991. photo: James Rexroad

he Dwarves began sometime in 1981, in a high school in Illinois, when a few forceful outsiders came together and forged one of the enduring firebrands of punk rock attitude in an attempt to get back at the snooty haven of

normality that spawned them. But it wasn't until the move to San Francisco that the band really came into its own, developing a more mature style that blended their early garagepunk attitude with the raucous simplicity of pop-laden punk rock. Maybe they didn't invent it, but they sure crystallized the beautiful noise punk rock makes when strained through a half-century of American rock and roll.

The event that brought the Dwarves the most notoriety was the impermanent death of guitarist Hewhocannotbenamed. While the man himself is still mum on the topic, no one can ever know where he went or what prompted his return. Instead, I recommend we take the opportunity to enjoy his special gifts. I for one am glad that the whole deaththing didn't take. I think there should be at least one swashbuckling masked man who breaks his silence for no woman, reporterly or otherwise.

Much has been made in other sources about Sub/Pop's decision to drop the band when they "discovered" the less-than-cold corpse of Hewhocannotbenamed. Far from being a hoax perpetrated by the band on an unsuspecting label staff, the event actually typifies Sub/Pop's irreverent attitude and unconventional relationship with its customers. Many of the communiques emanating from the corporate office have a faintly snotty ring, as did the majority of their early advertizing. In the ads it was very common to find the consumer being mocked and cajolled, if not downright bullied, in that cheeky way we Gen X-ers think we invented. Regardless, if a publicity stunt it was, then the stink of Sub/Pop is all over it.

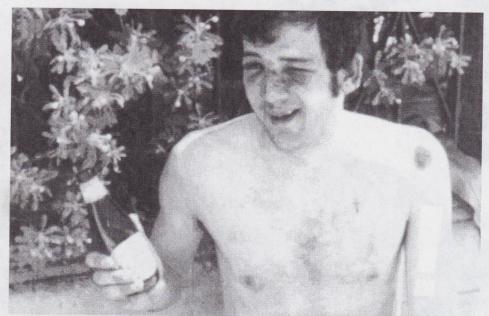
Several years have since passed, and still no one's talking. The company sticks to their decision to protest the Dwarves' "trivialization of death." Personally, I think death is itself utterly *impossible* to trivialize, since by its very nature it trivializes everything else in its path. No author has ever been charged with the "trivialization of death" for killing off a literary device, and in any case the persona Hewhocannotbenamed cannot ever be killed, since he lives only in the minds of his fans. And if the man decides not to don the mask for awhile, then who can blame him?

When I set out to write this article, the first problem I anticipated was the impossibility of separating fact from fiction when it comes to the swirl of rumors surrounding this band. I pretty quickly decided that as far as most people were concerned, they'd actually rather not know what is true and what isn't. The "real story" just isn't the point with the Dwarves. Their larger-than-life legend, together with their music, is the real essence of this band. These four interviews contain just four snippets of memory, so I am in no

way endorsing any of what follows as the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. With a cultural phenomenon like the Dwarves, there can be no single, objective truth. They just *are*, and they just fucking *rock*.

To know Blag Dahlia is to not know a damn thing, really. He's a crafty, downright devious guy, capable of talking his way out of the slipperiest slander charges or statutory rape raps. As Bay Area punk rock impresario Audra Angeli-Morse put it, "Blag is a greasy little Greek olive. You tell him I said that. He's just impossible. He comes up in here with his shirt off, and talks busi-

mers are paid to play what the audience wants to hear. When you're listening to white radio, though, all you get is a pretty accurate picture of what is being shoved down the throats of white folks. It's so fucking lame. I just wonder, like, who are they kidding? Because as soon as they play something that kids actually might like, you can totally hear the difference. When you hear fuckin' White Zombie, or Marilyn Manson, or Korn, something with a little bit of energy to it...And then you compare...And even that Blink 182 song, which I fuckin' hate, at least when that comes on I feel like it is probably some-



INNOCENCE PERSONIFIED: Pillar of Society, Rocker of Socks, Knocker of Many a Pair of Boots, ladies and gentlemen, Blag Dahlia.

ness, then goes home and forgets about it. I now tape record all our calls, 'cause I am sick of his shit. He's always trying to get something extra..." But she's stepping hard on the grin creeping into her stern face. She sighs, and her eyes go a little softer. "Princess Blagatha. What would we do without him." Just as quickly, she's back to fierce. "I don't know why you've gotta go writing all this and inflating that head of his any more. It's hard enough for him to get through the door as it is..."

When I picked Blag up from the Dwarves house, he was seemingly pre-programmed on this rant about why he only listens to black radio these days. I, for one, get only AM radio in my '67 Falcon, so I have no idea what he's talking about. But, since he got me stoned, and we're on our way to get food, I'm sitting back and enjoying his everwitty commentary...

Blag Dahlia: On black radio, the program-

thing that some kid who's 20 or 22 thinks is pretty okay. But some of it - like that band Creed, have you heard that?

TG: Uh, I've heard of them...

BD: A blatant attempt to rip off Pearl Jam. And they have all the *worst* aspects of Pearl Jam. Like, they have a whole song that doesn't rhyme anywhere. A whole song with no pop melody, just sort of a droning. It sounds like a Gregorian chant from 1100, it's like, *[chanting away]*

"Uuuuhaaahhuuuhhhaaahh." You're just, like, "What the fuck?"

And Marilyn Manson's most recognizable thing to date is still that cover of a Eurythmics song. Pretty commercial, and cheesy, and lame. Even with the huge records he's had since then, that's what most people think of when they think of him. Nobody really cares about those guys' songs, it's just that they've got a cool way of looking and acting.

The only way to describe white radio is:

Tired. On hip hop stations, the DJ's have a certain cadence to the way they talk, and they'll play a beat behind it, so even when the ads are playing, it at least keeps you fundamentally interested. Unlike the white stations, where everything just comes to a screeching halt when the ads come on. It's like watching a situation comedy or something. The ad comes on and you can leave the room, y'know?

TG: [Walking around Haight Street] I used to go to school, work, and pretty much spend all my time in this neighborhood. Jesus Christ, what are all these places?

Shirts was a big gay thing that, like, Warfield bands did. Now, it's just the opposite. Nobody goes to a show for the experience of it; the experiences are pretty tame. They go to get a t-shirt. They go to the t-shirt booths first. I used to go for the experience of it. "Maybe I'll meet a girl, maybe I'll get in a fight, maybe I'll have some fun." Now, it's like, "Hey, I wanna buy something."

TG: Now I can wear my shirt, to prove I was here, and show everybody how cool I am...So lately, you've been pretty involved in the production end of things, and on the new album,

that you can do a lot of really good stuff without spending a lot of money. In the late '80's and early '90's, indie bands were getting big contracts, and I think they were really just getting bamboozled a lot. The company would wave a lot of money in their faces during the initial stage and the band would think they were getting a lot, but that was gonna end up being spent on big producers and big studios. Some of them ending up making great records, but a lot was pretty fucking mediocre; they didn't make anything that was any good or sold anything, but just cost a lot to produce. And that was all recoupable, and it killed bands. In a way, I was lucky that we were so avoided by major labels that I didn't have to deal with it.

TG: The early records had a lot more of the '6o's garage punk influence, and then there was some doo-wop, which reminds me of when I first listened to the Misfits and realized they were all basically just Elvis songs...

BD: Well, the Misfits were a huge influence on me, as was Elvis. Most bands, when they like Elvis, they try to sound like Elvis and dress like Elvis. If they like the Misfits, then they try to sound like the Misfits and dress like the Misfits. Our thing was always that we had a huge pool of different kinds of songs we liked, and we'd just throw 'em all in and come out with something. I just never wanted to be in a rockabilly band, even though I liked rockabilly. I never wanted to be in a surf band, even though I liked surf. And I never wanted to be in a punk band, even though I liked punk. I just wanted to play rock and roll that had some fun to it. But then again, if you're trying to sell some records, it's best to fit into one narrow formula, and do what has already come out. But that's not really an option for me.

It's funny to be sitting here talking about records, because all anybody wants to hear about with the Dwarves is how many people got their heads smashed in, which is cool by me, because that's part of what I think is the fun aspect of it. This isn't the fun stuff. If I were reading an article, I wouldn't give a fuck about any of this. I'd only want to know, who did they fuck and who did they beat up?

TG: Vadge seems to express that Dwarves mentality the best.

BD: Vadge has always been the truest Dwarf, the ohe who was actually like what we would sing about. Like, half the time I was just singing about it and thought it was funny, but it wasn't what I was doing, necessarily. I mean, I did a lot of sleazy shit, too, but Vadge...

It's funny to be sitting here talking about *records*, because all anybody wants to hear about with the Dwarves is how many people got their heads smashed in, which is cool by me, because that's part of what I think is the fun aspect of it.

-Blag Dahlia

BD: A whole bunch of bullshit. There's nothing to do in the upper Haight anymore. There's plenty to buy, there's just nothing to do. It used to be, up here, there was just always something going on. Nightbreak had shows every night, the Full Moon Saloon had shows every night, the I-Beam had shows every night, the Kennel Club had live shows... Now there's not one credible live music venue up here. But economically, the place is doing better than ever. There used to be things to do, now there's only things to buy. There used to be a bowling alley; it was a thing to do. But now, nobody's interested in things to do, because that's not suburban enough or lame enough. If you go bowling, it's like a social thing to do, you hang out and do it with a group of people. Haight Street is fucking dedicated to consuming things. And that's exactly what rock and roll is like, punk rock. When I went to shows when I was a kid, most bands didn't even sell shirts. Nobody even thought about that.

Come Clean, you really flex a lot of production muscle. That is a world away from where you started, though, isn't it?

BD: Oh, yeah. A world away. I was totally allergic to all that manipulation shit, I never fucked with it at all. We just played live. Played rock and roll. This preoccupation with the studio basically just grew out of tour burnout. After a while, it just kills you to be on the road all the time, and one day we turned around and realized, "Better not fuck with that shit for awhile." So I started thinking a lot about how to make records. I'd been making them all along, and just sort of stumbling through it and falling into various things, and still making pretty okay records.

TG: You once mentioned to me that you looked at how much *some* people were spending, and you thought about how much it took *you* to make a record...

BD: People are starting to understand, now,

TG: You personally are kinda famous for fucking with couples that aren't getting along.

BD: We played a show on Halloween, many years ago. Some kind of "indie-band" thing. It was out in Kansas, somewhere, and we ran into this couple. The chick was this big, kinda Amazon, drunk chick that was all hot and nasty, and she was with her boyfriend, this kinda wimpy dude, traveling in this van. As we watched them get progressively more fucked-up and take acid, and get more and more confused, we just kinda guided her into the van and started fuckin' her, kinda before he knew it, and then as he was pounding on the windshield and yelling, we let her out of the van, and he started screaming at her. Later on, we heard her yelling at him, "We've been locked up in that van for a month, I just wanted something real!"

TG: I bet they didn't last very long after that...

BD: Yeah. Basically, there was a lot of very foul behavior, a lot of drunken fucking of nasty people in the earlier days, then in the later days a more organized form of debauchery. Where you wouldn't let just *anybody* into your trip, but particularly worthwhile people you just have to have. Either because they're just so demented, or because they're teenage girls.

TG: Oh, yeah. "Teenage girls" seems to be a recurring theme with you.

BD: Well, as you get older and creepier, teenage girls look better and better. I never used to care about it. Suddenly it became a big deal.

TG: Why?

BD: Because when you're a teenager, they all like older guys and shit. They're not as interested in you, and you don't give a shit cause they are your contemporaries, so they're just around. When you get older they take on this mythical significance, and you take on that same significance to them. It's kinda funny. Teenage girls are the only perk of playing rock music. There isn't any other reason to get into it.

TG: Really? Is that why you got into it?

BD: Yeah, well, I was a teenage boy, so it was probably teenage girls. And I just never progressed.

TG: A stunted adolescence.

BD: Absolutely. When I was younger we'd sit around my basement playing covers and girls would come over. There was nothing else to do. I lived in Illinois. It's not like California, where there was lotsa neat stuff to do, and you could go surfing and stuff.

TG: Well, thank god, because then you started a band.

BD: There ya go. It was always just to meet girls, and potentially fuck them if you got the chance. There have been guys in the band that were particularly good at fighting, just not me. And we always had to. At least a couple of times per tour people would get pissed off because a lot of random violence-type things would happen.

TG: You mean things in the audience?

BD: Yeah, I was always just throwing things, or kicking people, tryin' to have some fun, breaking things...You wouldn't want it to be a fight, but then it would be a fight, and you'd get caught up in it. I never thought I was particularly prone to it, but it probably seemed like it to other people. But mainly I'd just get roped into it.

TG: Well, I've seen what happens when someone gets on stage with you.

BD: Yeah, there was shit like that. And when Rex was in the band there used to be a lot of fights. If somebody makes fun of me, I don't have a problem with it, because I know I can make fun of them and be a lot funnier about it and make them feel ridiculous. But you make fun of Rex, man, and he just smacks you down, right? He's more into the violent aspect of it. I remember getting in a big fight out in Texas, where he just took off his bass and smashed some guy in the head with it, and all the guy's friends started fighting with us. But that was a good one, because me and Vadge hit this guy at the same time, and he just crumbled. But a lot of that shit got kinda complicated when guys start going to jail and you have to bail them out and shit. And I never wanted it.

TG: You're a lover not a fighter, right?

BD: Yeah. That's exactly it.

TG: It decreases your chances of having time to get laid after the show.

BD: Some guys get into rock and roll because they like to hang out with guys, and sweat a lot, and be a dude, and fight.

I'm not really into that bullshit. I'd rather be off with some girl, you know what I mean?

TG: You do cut quite a swath through the ladies, Blag.

BD: Yeah, so fuck it. I'm not interested in getting in some brawl with some guy who is essentially just upset because he didn't get fucked. That's always at the center of their anger, or the reason that they want to fight so badly, is that they've had to watch this parade of women pass them by. And all they can do is cry about it and get in fights with their buddies and complain. We never complained much. We were always just out there having fun. There were some fights and stuff, but mainly I got the wrong end of it. And then there are the pussies who just throw things at you from the crowd, out of sheer jealousy and hatred. They are really pathetic.

Especially in punk rock, where they're trying to make you feel guilty for making a hundred dollars. I mean, they're such a bunch of crybabies. That's probably the worst thing about punk rock, is that the audience just can't admit that they like music and that they wanna hang out. You have to justify why you're there. You have to justify why you're allowed to be in their precious, pussy town, playing punk rock for them and trying to have some fun. I didn't know I needed an explanation for this shit. I didn't know you were the fuckin' Mayor of Albuquerque. In a lot of other forms of music, they accept that you're there to entertain them and have some fun. Punk rock is one of the few forms where they kind of expect a whole philosophical profile. And then you're supposed to be buddies with them, too, on top of it all. It's like, "Fuck, dude, I don't like you, just listen to the shit and shut up." If you want me to like you, why don't you play some music. Just because you show up doesn't mean you have the right to dictate what people are playing, or how much they're making, or what's right and what's wrong. If you actually play, then you have something to say.

TG: You guys build up energy in a pretty crazy little cone of mania for like 20 minutes. I have noticed that it does leave maybe a little unresolved energy out there, and I think that's where a lot of the fights come from.

BD: It's always been an important thing with the Dwarves, building up this energy and then not quite satisfying everybody so that again, they have to do it themselves a little bit. People are so used to going out and being entertained, it's gotten to a point where they're just not taking part in it anymore. I mean, what's a good show? A good show is one where the band is good and the audience is good. A good show is not just one where the band is good, I mean, that's just not a good show. That's a good performance by a band. When I go out, I wanna see a good show, and that requires a crowd. So if the crowd is lame, a lot of

time it's not their fault. They've been made lame by lame bands. The bands don't expect anything of them, and they don't expect anything of themselves. It's all about buying a t-shirt and proving that you were there, instead of going and having a good time. People don't really even understand, anymore, that in exchange for the money that you pay, you're supposed to have a good time. That's the idea. You paid your money, now go and have a good time. Instead, they pay money to

get in, then they pay *more* money for a shirt. Then they go away, thinking, "Well, that wasn't that great." No, it *wasn't*. You have to make it great. You and your friends are going to go there and *make* it fun.

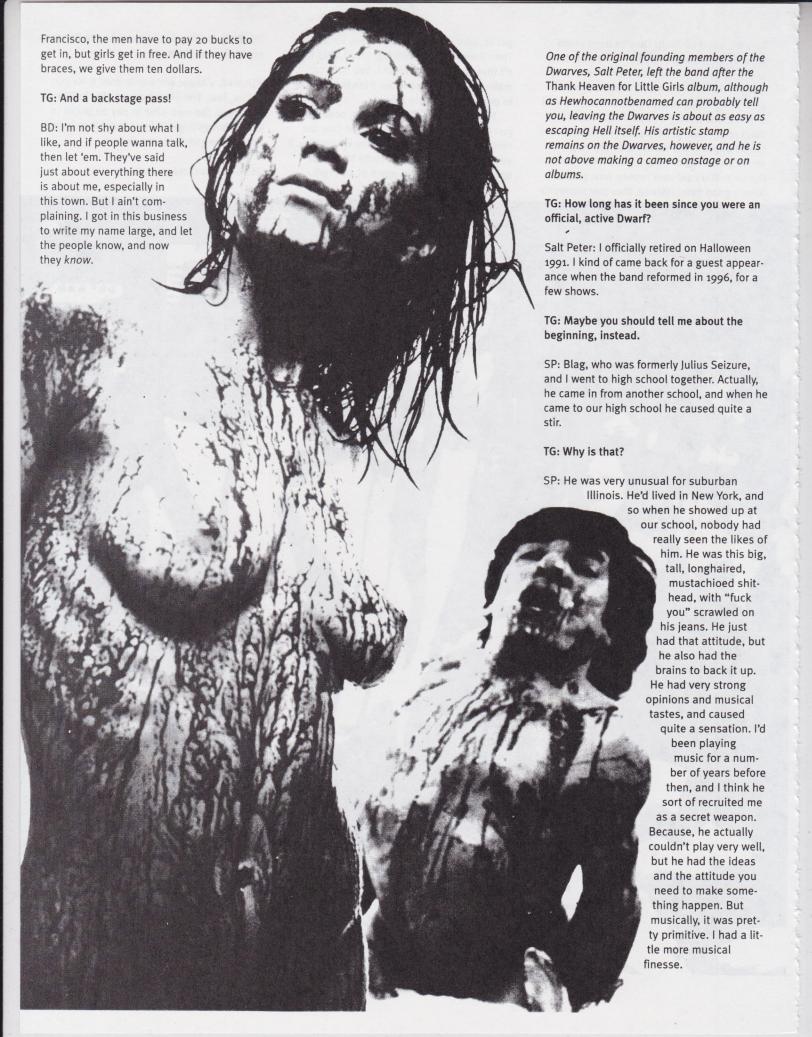
So that's where it's at with us, now. We just leave everybody wanting, and they are ready to have a good time when we do play. If you're playing for them in every town four times a year, it's not as much of an event.

TG: Well, that's what I expect from a Dwarves show: A good time.

BD: Well, y'know, we're only doin' it for you ladies, Teal. The next show we play in San Francisco, the men have to pay 20 bucks to get in, but girls get in free. And if they have braces, we give them ten dollars.

TG: And a backstage pass!





TG: What were you into at the time that you met him?

SP: Mostly English power pop like the Jam, and the early Who stuff. All kinds of stuff.

TG: And he came in with ...?

SP: He came in with Zappa and *Pebbles*-style garage music.

TG: So that's where the earlier garage-y sound came from?

SP: I think it was an attitude that suited him. I think Blag saw that it was something that he could play, but the attitude was perfect for him. A certain disgruntled, American youth. The garage stuff and the Zappa stuff were sort of at odds with one another. Because the Zappa stuff is sort of sophisticated and cerebral, but the garage stuff was just complete 1/4 retardation. It was easier to play. But he was really into the Zappa stuff. In fact, he introduced a lot of us to that. Together I think we formed an intersting union. He was always faintly disparaging of the pop I listened to, but not enough to change my mind. I think Blag used the band as a weapon to assault the high school, to be honest. He wanted a vehicle to get up there and say "Fuck you!" to everybody who had looked down their nose at him. And it was very effective. He ended up being kind of a cherished mascot at the school. Eventually, after we went through being Sexually Deprived Youth and Suburban Nightmare, we became the Dwarves in about 1985.

TG: Was Hewho in your school, too? And how about Vadge?

SP: No, Hewho's a bit older than us. He grew up in Wisconsin. Vadge Moore didn't come into the picture until much later, like 1988. Sigh Moan was the drummer, and a guy named, I think, Feast or Famine. In later years others were added, like Rex Everything, and Spike, and Wholley Smokes, and Chip Fracture. Or, before them, Marky de Sade and Eric Generic.

TG: I've come to see Vadge as the Id of the band.

SP: Idiot, maybe. Vadge really went through quite a transformation. When we first met him, he was like a pupae, about to emerge as this butterfly. He started out shy and timid, and by the end of it he was a complete asshole: satanic, perverse, and all of those things that he is until this day. So it was interesting to watch him mutate.

TG: What about being in the Dwarves does that to people?

SP: I think he was a willing victim. The Dwarves bring out the worst in people. The freedom to not censor oneself. The freedom to go above and beyond the realm of good taste. Certainly, for me, it was very liberating. At the time I was writing a lot of this stuff, hearing GG Allin gave me permission to say whatever I wanted. "You can actually just say whatever you want!" I think the band was great because we pushed the envelope. So I think Hewho and Vadge just took the bait.

TG: You come across as a somewhat calm, sedate individual, but I know that's got to be an acquired trait.

SP: Well, I was ten years younger. It was pretty madcap. It was a different scene then. There was no money to be had, so everything was very homemade...all our equipment. There was always some dope fiend, or skinhead, who went around with us because they didn't have anywhere else to be. And we did everything by the seat of our pants. There was never any tour support. I think it was better in a way - not that I wouldn't have liked to have been paid - because you had to really be resourceful. You really meet people when you're stuck in some town for a week with no money. You just find some people and hang out. It was great, and it was tedious, and it was enriching, and it was boring. It's definitely different now, with the paychecks.

TG: Or, now, the bands who never even tour before they record...

SP: It was very homemade, but we really felt we had a purpose, we really felt we were doing something really important. So we're going to do it even if it bankrupts us. Which it never *really* did, but it came pretty close to it. We'd come back from a three-month tour with a thousand dollars each. But back then, it didn't matter. When you went on tour, you just gave up your apartment, then stayed with your girlfriend when you got back.

TG: Or found a girlfriend. Or somebody else's.

SP: I remember once we ended up meeting this woman, and she said, "Oh, come back to my apartment." She was living with her boyfriend at the time. So we all went back, and it's like three in the morning, we're all hanging out and drinking, partying. So at about six o'clock, the boyfriend, who turned out to be her ex and had been in bed with his new girlfriend, comes out and says, "Who the

hell are you?"; then he kicked us all out. She neglected to tell us they'd broken up.

TG: I am interested in these kinds of stories, because they all go into the urban mythology that is the Dwarves.

SP: I think the Dwarves were really much more willing to have fun on tour, much more willing to really recognize that this is the best possible situation. And it is interesting, we were playing in Austin one night, opening for the Rollins Band. And we had parked the van behind the club. We had this guy traveling with us, our videographer. In other words, a friend of ours with a video camera that's our videographer. Vadge had met some woman in Dallas or Houston or somewhere, and she'd followed us to Austin for the show. Before the show he was in the van behind the club, fucking her, and we, of course, knew this as he'd invited us to go and film it. I remember sort of sneaking around with Rollins' guitar player, and we were sticking the camera up and filming, and I looked over at Rollins' guitar player and could tell by the look on his face that he never, ever got to have fun on tour. Because Henry's such a total fucking tyrant. It was like, "No. This is what touring is like. This is how to have fun on tour." He just looked at me like, "God, you guys get to have sex on tour?" I felt kind of bad for him.

TG: One of the things that stands out most about the Dwarves is the ability to work up such an incredible amount of intensity in such a short time. How did that come about?

SP: I think that we were so tightly wound that when we opened up, it just couldn't sustain itself very long. When you play that hard on gear that was so fucked up, and initiate a whole assault on the audience, you just can't do it for a half hour. You can do it for maybe ten or fifteen minutes, then it's just over.

TG: Assaulting the audience...There's been a lot of that following the band around all these years. As well as fights in the audience, seemingly unrelated to the band.

SP: Oh, I don't think they were *unrelated* to the band. People would go to our shows just to act out all their aggression. I think we provided a good soundtrack for them.

TG: I think there's something just *short* of cathartic in a Dwarves set.

SP: Well, hopefully, yes.

TG: I think that is what happens out in the audience. That catharsis has to happen, so...

SP: The shows have on occasion gotten very, very nasty. There was a show in Baltimore, where these two sort of skinhead-looking guys positioned themselves in front of the stage. All these good-natured, nice, sorta college-radio dorks who had put us up and sponsored the show wanted to go and hang out, kinda slam or whatever they do, and these two assholes stand right in front of the stage. The one guy punched this guy in the face, and I could actually see from the stage that he'd shattered his cheekbone. There were dents in the guy's face. So I gave the guy ten bucks and told him, "Go to the emergency room, your face is broken." There were times in Seattle where Blag would just willfully chuck a pitcher into the crowd, and crack a guy's head open, and then the ambulance would be there. That's, I think, the stuff of legend. It wasn't really calculated, because I was actually up on stage going, "When is that fuckin' thing coming back?" And it did. We played with Nirvana in Seattle right before they really took off. We were playing, I don't know, "Let's Fuck", and suddenly this green blur comes flying out of the crowd and cracked me right here (pointing to a scar) opening up my head very nicely, and I went down for about ten seconds, got up, finished the song, and then went and got my head sewed up.

TG: Ugh, God. And that was the end of *that* Dwarves set, huh?

SP: Yeah. You just never knew when the violence was going to erupt.

TG: It seems like the violence came from both ends, both on and off the stage. Blag said to me at one point that there are things that didn't need to be done, and I understood him to mean throwing stuff into the crowd and stuff like that. But I still see him, when someone gets onstage with him...

SP: I've seen Blag totally crack people...We were in Boston, playing a show at the Rat, which isn't there anymore. Some fairly aggro kids would come to shows, and this guy, like, wasn't getting it that it was kind of a joke. And he was getting in Blag's face, and Blag's going, "Get the fuck outta here," and pushing the guy. And it continued to escalate, so at one point Blag motioned to the bouncers to get the guy out of the club. Just as the bouncers were getting the guy out, Blag totally sucker-punched the guy over the bouncer's shoulder. A direct hit. So we're sitting backstage, enjoying a postshow refreshment, when one of the bouncers comes in and says, "Hey, that guy we threw out broke all the windows in your van." So we got to drive from Boston to



Chicago with no windows in the middle of November.

TG: Ah, chilly.

SP: So Blag can say anything he wants about things that shouldn't have happened, but I assure you every single thing was deliberate. He loves to incite riots. Which is fun, until your head gets cracked open, which I've experienced firsthand. "Hmmm...Maybe I should quit." That's part of why it was easier to decide, after ten years, that it was time to quit. I could lose an eye, or get my throat slit, or who knows what's gonna happen next. I might as well take my Nirvana trophy and hit the books.

TG: Nirvana trophy?

SP: Seattle was actually a true scene, if it can be said that there ever was one. I think that you can say that there are scenes that have come up in certain cities, whether it's L.A. in the '60's or New York in the '70's...I think that Seattle was a real scene like those. With everybody going to each others' shows and a sort of uniting force. I really felt like we were part of something that had some kind of reality behind it. I mean, records were coming out, they looked great, they sounded great. So much better than all the Mickey Mouse shit that came before that. Everything else had been so homemade before that. All of a sudden, you open a magazine, and there's an ad. And you didn't put it in there yourself. So it was great to be a part of that renaissance, of sorts. But we were always kinda the token bad-boys of that scene. We were outsiders, because we were a San Francisco band. I think people really valued us because we had that novel thing. One time we had just played a show, actually it was down here at the Kennel Club, and it was around the time that the dress thing started happening in the Dwarves, which I started.

TG: You did?

SP: Well, I had the best legs in the band, so I was elected to wear the fishnets...So Krist Novoselic and Kurt were there, and I was walking up from the club and I ran into them...We didn't really talk to them, we were at the same label though, and they were like, "We gotta play a show with you guys..." And I remember that Kurt didn't say anything, he just got down on his knees and took my hand and kissed it. At the time, no one knew he was going to be this icon, so I thought, "You're kinda melodramatic, but *yeah*, we can play a show together." Now, looking back, it has more meaning. Also, that had something to do with me leaving in a way. That's the

kind of band that goes from where we were, to where they went. There are very few bands that can do that, and I felt like the Dwarves were really just far too underground for that ever to happen. Now, I actually think that things have changed enough that the Dwarves could cross over, but at the time that we were doing our thing, no way.

TG: It's partly because of Nirvana that it is a different climate now...

SP: I agree. We were so much more purely subversive, I felt. When you choose that route...it's like Blag always said, "If you can't be good, be forceful." I didn't feel there was anything we could do to go beyond what we had done. We had a brilliant catalog of records, and I felt like I actually wanted to do what the Jam did, which was guit while you're ahead. I felt like there were so many examples of bands who failed to do that. And for me, personally, I wanted it to end right here. That's not to say that what's come since then isn't really great. The new record is the bestsounding thing the Dwarves have ever done. It's killer. It's different. You can't compare Come Clean to Blood, Guts and Pussy because the two are like apples and oranges. Blag's production skills have grown so much. I think it's the best-sounding thing he's ever done. I think it's just further evidence that he has an incredible ear for music and production...Blag couldn't tie his own fucking shoes when I met him. And now he can do all this program shit. I think it's a very radio-friendly record.

TG: I thought that about *Young and Good Looking*, that it had a lot of songs that would go over well on the radio. Unfortunately, most of it was far too filthy.

SP: But that's such an interesting paradox, because rap can be completely filthy and get away with it, but the Dwarves are just so nasty...There's something about it that when white guys do it, it doesn't fly as well. It's unfair.

TG: And now Blag listens to rap, I think, almost exclusively. And you can hear it on the record.

SP: Definitely. I think he's been able to incorporate that influence in a very interesting way. Instead of trying to be someone he's not, he can take it and add it to what he would write anyway. It's evidence of his continuing development as a songwriter and producer. He still asks me to come back to the band, and I tell him, "Blag, you're just a different thing now." I think he calls me anytime anyone is out of the band.

TG: He seems sure Vadge isn't really gone.

SP: What the fuck else is Vadge Moore gonna do?

TG: Well, he's gonna have fun with Sean Heskett on tour with Phoenix Thunderstone, that's for sure...

SP: Yeah, but once you're in the Dwarves, you're poisoned. You can't fit back in. It's very difficult.

TG: You seem to have done okay...

SP: Yeah, but I may be the exception. We'll see what Vadge Moore looks like in ten years. He'll be singing a different tune, if he's even alive, which I'm not sure is going to be the case.

TG: Well, that *will* be interesting. People must still come up to you and recognize you, don't they?

SP: Not so much on the street. When I go to Dwarves shows, certainly. In fact, yesterday I was on a bus. This guy facing me had headphones on, and I'm listening, going, "Is it? It couldn't be..." And a few minutes later he goes to take the disc out, and it's Young and Good Looking. And there's that moment, where you go "I played on that fucking record," but I didn't say anything because I don't look very punk rock these days and I think it would be disillusioning for him. I just felt like, you know what, keep your fantasy that the Dwarves are all a bunch of nasty punks - I didn't want to spoil that for him. Fantasy is much more interesting. A lot of the Dwarves mythology is true, but we all put our pants on one leg at a time. It certainly is not just myth, it's just that for me it was kinda a long time ago. A lot of our shows are just what you've heard. "The Dwarves only played ten minutes, and violence broke out." People just come out of the woodwork for us. In small towns, kids just live for that. They needed us to be total hooligans. And the shows, pretty much, delivered the goods. But you don't necessarily want to meet all your idols. It can be disappointing.

TG: You do come to expect a certain amount of mania from a Dwarves set. And I don't think folks are frequently disappointed.

SP: The Dwarves always knew we were going to have a very particular place in history. And I think a lot of it is deliberately constructed. I mean, GG Allin is going to go down in history for shitting on himself. And I think the Dwarves are always going to be loved for being a little smarter than GG Allin, with that

speedball rush that isn't overblown or drawn out. It's just a quick shot of sex and violence and fun. It wasn't like we sat around over our capuccinos trying to figure out how we were going to do this...A defining moment in our style was when we played CBGB's, touring on Toolin.' Up until that point, it had gotten a little wild but was still sorta tame. We hadn't done any nudity up to this point. Blag came out, and they had tables up at the front of the stage, with couples sitting there nicely. Blag just stood on one of the tables and started walking on them, and everyone cleared out. There was this little halo of space around him. The tables tipped, and he fell down and cracked his head on something, and was bleeding - which is not something you calculate. So it kept going, and it just turned into mayhem, and they cut the power on us. So Blag comes leaping from the audience and trashes the drum kit. And that was the new thing, right there. No one planned it, no one thought it out. When Pete Townsend started smashing guitars he didn't plan it either, but he knew enough to embrace it when it happened. There was something going on that none of us had planned for. It just kinda fed on itself and got more and more insane. Hewho had been wearing masks since Suburban Nightmare, but the whole thing with diapers and nudity just evolved. It's like that comeback show we did, where we sold out the Trocadero with like a thousand people. Even at the height of the early Dwarves' popularity, we never sold a place that big out. The Chatterbox, maybe. What they're doing now is entirely credible on its own. But if you want to see the real peak of the Dwarves, you have to go back in time to 1990.

Rex Everything has been coming and going in the Dwarves since 1993. An alter-ego of his is currently on the road in Queens of the Stone Age.

TG: When did you first meet up with the Dwarves?

RE: In '88 or '89. I've always liked them, and I was in a band called Kyuss, and we ended up going on tour with them and met 'em and hung out and got to know 'em. The previous tour, in Madison, they came to see us in order to heckle us, but they ended up liking us and we ended up becoming good friends.

TG: What do you first remember about Blag?

RE: He was wearing women's panty hose and nothing else, and he was high as fuck. Vadge was talking a lot about Satan, giving me the shpiel and trying to convert me. Doing the Vadge Moore thing.



photo: Mike Shapiro

TG: Hitting on every girl...

RE: And guys as well...! think he actually hit on me. I was flattered. Or is that flattened?

TG: Hewhocannotbenamed?

RE: One of a kind, for sure... [Laughing] He teaches disturbed children by day, then dons a mask at night and takes off all his clothes. He's out there. One of the cooler people I've met. You kind of get his worst in his live set.

TG: The Dwarves seem to bring out the worst in everybody...

RE: It all comes out on stage. It all comes out at once, so it's kinda like an explosion of tempers and energy. For however long it lasts.

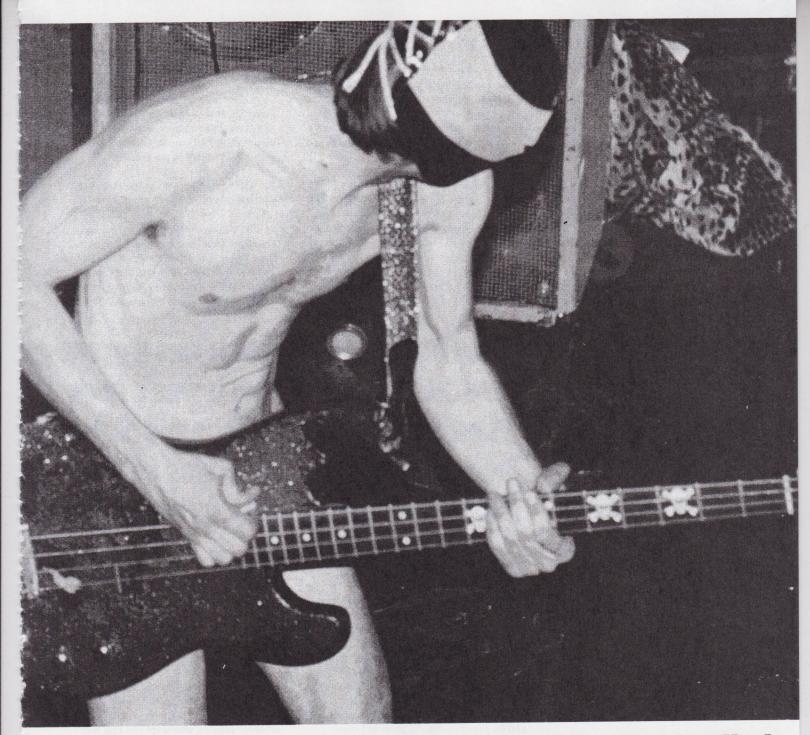
TG: Why do you think the set is so short?

RE: Well, I think Blag's old now. He's an old man, and I'm still young, so...When I was doing live shows with them, we just put so much energy into the live set that sometimes we just blew up in 20 minutes.

TG: One of the new songs, "River City Rapist", is yours, isn't it?

RE: I sing it and play rhythm guitar and bass

on it. And I wrote it in its entirety. It's about a scumbag down in Texas. I kinda put myself in this guy's shoes and became the River City Rapist for a song. It's out there, and it's definitely going to offend and give the record that Dwarves element, which we all thought was lacking on this record. There's a lot of poppy stuff on it. I mean, the Dwarves have always gone in a pop direction, but it needed some Blood, Guts, and Pussy, y'know? And I think that song kinda gives it that. That's what I was thinking about when I wrote it, "What's gonna piss people off?" If they take it too seriously, then fine. Whatever. I'm not trying to make any new friends, I got plenty of them. TG: Do you have a favorite Dwarves story?



RE: In '91 we were all on tour. I was in Kyuss at the time. It was the *Thank Heaven for Little Girls* tour for them, and we were on our way to Lawrence, Kansas to play at the Outhouse.

On the way, we stopped at a Dairy Queen. We were all caravanning, Kyuss and the Dwarves, so everyone was riding in different vans, all mixed up. So we get a couple of hours away and pull over to get gas, and then someone says, "Hey, is Blag in your van?" "No." And we're like, "Oh shit, he musta got out at the Dairy Queen." So we ask ourselves, "should we go back?" Pete, the bass player at the time, goes "No, he's a big boy. We've played here many times. If we go back, he'll have already thumbed a ride." So we keep

We were playing with a band called Cocknoose from Lawrence, and then these big skinhead lookin' guys pull out loaded AK-47s on stage and start pointing them at the crowd.

-Rex Everything

going, like three hours more to the gig. And there's no sign of Blag.

The Outhouse was this old abandoned place that they stuck PA gear in. It was in the middle of this cornfield, which was on the border of one police jurisdiction, whereas the road accessing it was in the other jurisdiction. The police could drive down the road, but they couldn't actually come in and break it up. So it was scary, but kinda cool at the same time, like anything could happen to us out here. We were playing with a band called Cocknoose from Lawrence, and then these big skinhead lookin' guys pull out loaded AK-47s on stage and start pointing them at the crowd, and we're going, "Holy Shit." Both Kyuss and Cocknoose plays, and we were getting worried. So Pete goes, "Dude, why don't you just sing." And that was my first show with the Dwarves, and I had to fill in for Blag, which were kinda tall shoes to fill for the long-haired kid that I was at the time. So I just did it and took off all my clothes, and now I don't think anyone really knew the difference. We opened with "Dairy Queen", and I sang "We left Blag at Dairy Queen..."

TG: What happened when he caught up with you?

RE: He showed up the next day, and he was pretty pissed, and he only had one thing to say: "I want all the money from the show. I want everone's cut, and I won't say another thing about it." So he got it, and that was it. But he got the band back again by the time we got to San Diego. He just disappeared with some groupie girl and left the band hanging, so I had to fill in again. And it was a packed house, so the band was kinda pissed. Plus we had a whole bunch of jocks trying to kill us while we played.

TG: Did you take care of business?

RE: Oh, absolutely.

TG: Did you ever live in the Dwarves house?

RE: Yeah, I played with them for five or six years. I did my time on the floor, and I had a room there for a while along with, you know, various San Francisco sluts.

TG: Yeah the hooers, I know. How about Blag's post-show disco parties?

RE: That was always a blast. You get done doin' a show, you weed out all the hardtails, and bring down all the gals and dance. And whatever happens, happens.

TG: That's why it says "Hardtail Hotel" in Magic Marker over the door, huh?

RE: Yeah, there are too many hardtails livin' there. You needa get some split-tails up in that place. It's chock fulla hardtails.

TG: I never noticed that there was any lack of pussy around there, or around the Dwarves in general.

RE: Yeah, well, y'know. We're good-lookin'.

I got a story for you. The first time I saw the Dwarves play, Blag punched me in the face. I was fucking pissed off. I saw 'em open for Poison Idea at the Country Club in Reseda. They played, I don't know, fifteen minutes? Which, at the time, was a long set for them. There's only so much coke you can do before your body gives out, right? It

might be him, I have no idea." But there's only one Hewhocannotbenamed. And we got six or eight month's worth of free publicity from that. For the first four he was "dead", and at least two or three where he wasn't. I was thinking "fuck, yeah, write it up, keep it comin"; I'll collect all the articles.

TG: But the record company didn't agree, which is just retarded.

RE: Oh, they agreed. They thought it was a great idea till it came out that it was a hoax. Then they washed their hands of the Dwarves and the story. It was Sub Pop and it was Seattle, and it was bullshit. There isn't anything good coming out of there anymore, anything

They ISub Popl thought it was a great idea till it came out that it was a hoax. Then they washed their hands of the Dwarves and the story. It was Sub Pop and it was Seattle, and it was bullshit.

-Rex Everything

was a case of "Let's get this show over so we can do the rest of it backstage..." So they're doin "Astroboy", and I'm in the front going, "Alright!" And Blag's fucking with security, like pulling on their hair and pouring water on them and all this shit, and I'm laughing. And then he comes up to me and and grabs me, and he's singing and puts the mike in my face, and I'm singing, and he punches me. As soon as I come back with my fist, he's gone and the drums are over, and he's nowhere on stage anymore. And I'm going "That motherfucker, I'm gonna kill that guy." And we ended up being friends. Right on, I can take a punch. It was classic Dwarves. It was outta control. It was cool.

TG: You were around for the Hewhocannotbenamed mess, weren't you?

RE: Yeah, we pulled the hoax that he died and fooled the world. (manaiacal laughter) Right after that, we were on the road with Flipper. It was a gas because there were people that thought I was him, and Blag was just feeding on it, "Yeah, I don't know if that's him. It

way. I hear that they have good heroin up there, though...

TG: Yeah, and I hear it's also pretty easy to buy a shotgun...

RE: Right. If you need those two things, you're in the right place. All I have to say is this: don't stop doing drugs, and fuck a lot, whoever you can, whenever you can. And don't be afraid to be dirty. That's what rock's about, right? Keepin' it dirty and nasty. A lot of bands suck because they brought the guilt element into rock, like "We gotta be nice and sweet". Fuck that shit, y'know? I like Iggy Pop. At least the Dwarves are still doin' that shit...keepin' it dirty.

This is what happens when you try to meet a Dwarf on a Sunday. It's pissing down rain, traffic is almost at a standstill, and you can barely see the storefronts on the other side of Van Ness Avenue from the bar where I meet Vadge Moore, the Cousin Id of the Dwarves.

Vadge Moore: Whatever you've heard, it's all true.

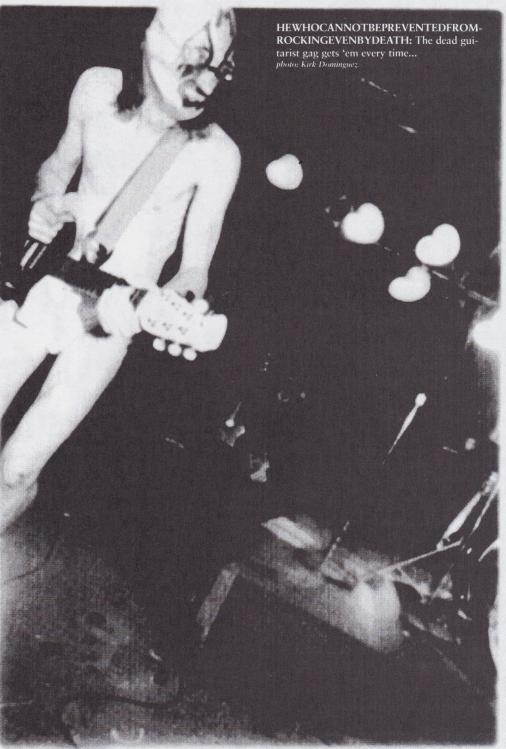
TG: Not only is all of it true, but much of it is about you. Why is that?

VM: They don't call me Vadge Moore for nothing. It has to do with me being a very dirty bird who likes to be involved with dirty things. Every day when I wake up I try to figure some way to satisfy my carnal desires, in some way, shape, or form. And I do. I always find a way. It's so easy.

TG: How had you even heard about the Dwarves?

VM: Oh, I'd seen the name around and read about them. At first they were like a psychedelic garage band like the Morlocks. Then when they moved here, people started saying, "This is no psychedelic band, this is more like GG Allin, these guys are nuts. All they do is play feedback and smash things and kill people." And I said to myself, "Wow. That sounds pretty cool." I was in Sonic Brain Jam at the time, and Tony Gill [now known as Wilson Gill...] started trying to find ways to open up for the Dwarves, because they were getting a big name for themselves. And so the bands started talking. Then Blag's fucked up girlfriend at the time although which one wasn't fucked up; given the nature of who she was going out with, she's gotta be - ended up moving into this house that Sonic Brain Jam had at Fell and Fillmore, which was where Blood, Guts, and Pussy was written. We had a rehearsal studio in the basement there. And that's where I met Hewhocannotbenamed, and we started a side band called the Gaping Wounds with his girlfriend.

Eventually Blag moved in there, free of rent and off his girlfriend, I might add. It's definitely a Dwarves legacy to always live off your girlfriend. Then they put out Toolin' for a Warm Teabag, which I just thought was brilliant. I thought they were the greatest band that walked the earth, as indeed they are. Sigh Moan, the drummer at the time - who was just as fucked up as I am but without the brains - couldn't quite play as fast as they wanted to play at that point. So they all agreed that at the end of the Teabag tour, he had to go. I just remember that as soon as they came back from tour, Sigh Moan walked in the house and said, "Welcome to the Dwarves, I'm outta here." Then he just walked out of there. Blag came in and said, "We have to have a talk." And from that moment I was in the band, which has now been going on for eleven years.



TG: I'd heard you were a bit more of an ingenue prior to joining the band...Maybe a little sweeter, maybe a little more naive...

VM: Well, the Dwarves were a vehicle for, in psychoanalytic terms, the shadow to come out. And I realized early on that if I was going to be in this band, there were aspects of my personality that are devious, evil, violent, sexual, and nasty that I wanted to explore, and I utilized the Dwarves to

do that. And I now am a much happier person.

TG: Much more fulfilled...

VM: Much more fulfilled...Now the various victims that surround me, who were in my path all those years, have had to deal with me wrestling with that shadow and that dark side. Maybe they didn't come out so well, but I certainly did.

TG: Well, that's the Satanist credo, is it not? "'Do what thou wilt' shall be the whole of the law," and all that?

VM: Yes, absolutely. You find your true nature and you follow it, regardless. As long as it truly is your nature. As long as it serves you, and makes your life better.

TG: A catalyst and conduit for your expression...So how do you now contemplate not being a Dwarf?

VM: I'll always be a Dwarf. It's like the mark of Cain. You really can't get it off. It was just time to go. If being in the Dwarves has taught me anything, it's be headstrong, be eccentric, be intelligent, and realize when it's time to drop something that no longer suits you as well. It was the greatest ten or eleven years of my life and it shaped my personality in many ways. I would never take back one iota of a second of it. And I can say that because I survived, I blossomed like a dark flower in the soil of the Dwarves.

TG: I suggested to Salt Peter that you were the Id of the Dwarves, and he said, "Idiot, maybe."

VM: (laughing) Salt Peter's wit is razor sharp. Of course, he's a *homosexual*...But that's okay.

TG: Also, we talked about the short Dwarves sets. I think it's essential to the experience of the Dwarves that it be such a short, intense burst of energy...

VM: It's like sex with us. An intense, short burst of energy. That's all you get, baby, that's all she wrote. Could you make me a steak sandwich? Thanks.

TG: Or...

VM: Get the fuck out of the tour bus...

TG: I did hear that story yesterday...

VM: She deserved it. She wouldn't screw me. You get on the tour bus with Vadge Moore of the Dwarves and expect to be taken to Spain and wined and dined, you damned well better put out. If you don't put out, you can expect me to pull over and put you out in the middle of the Autobahn, which is exactly what I did. If she doesn't understand the rules of the game, then she's gonna have to contemplate it in the middle of darkness, in the middle of nowhere on the Autobahn. The funniest thing was that she left her boyfriend that night in order to stay with me and drive with us to Spain. I guess she ended up flagging down a

car and going to the nearest town and calling him and begging him to pick her up.

TG: That's sort of a Dwarves legacy too, Blag told me about going into a club and looking for girls who were fighting with their boyfriends and finding the whole band a place to stay for the night.

VM: The Dwarves are well-known for finding girls that can't stand their loser boyfriends and wanna explore the dark side. And they do.

TG: And they tend to burn some bridges

TG: Yeaahh...A good influence, overall.

VM: Yeah. Very. Of course. Putting the Dwarves and Flipper on tour together is like putting Lucifer and Adolf Hitler on the road together.

But anyway, there's this gorgeous blonde sitting at the bar and I walk up to her and, as usual, start hitting on the hottest-looking or ugliest chick...whatever I can find on that particular night. We started talking, and it turned out that we both had the same obsession, which was the Marquis de Sade, who is still one of the best authors and philosophers, and one of the greatest devils, who ever



along the way.

VM: Yes they do. I still can't sit with my back to the door. You never know when some enemy from your past might come in the door. I want to see them first. You never know when you're gonna hear, "You fucked my girlfriend, or my daughter, or my sister, or my dog..."

TG: Or "my paraplegic..."

VM: (laughing) Yeah! My sadomasochistic paraplegic...

TG: This, I think, is a quintessential Dwarves story...

VM: I found this lovely young woman sitting at the bar where we were playing. Was it Cleveland? I don't know. This must have been '93...We were touring with Flipper. A bunch of really sweet fellas, Flipper is. A bunch of upstanding Bible-belt type guys...

lived. We started going into how I really enjoy sadism, and she did too, only in a masochistic sense. We kept talking, and she revealed that she would like me to really beat her ass. And I'm realizing this is definitely the girl for me tonight.

So I go do soundcheck and come back, and she's there. I said "come on backstage", and she grabs these crutches. And I thought, "Jesus Christ, what the hell is the matter with her?" To get into the backstage, you had to go up these stairs, so I carried her. Once upstairs, I asked her what had happened, and she said she had been up in a tree, really drunk, and had fallen out of the tree, and that since then she had been paralyzed from the waist down. I was thinking "Wow, I've had sex with a lot of women in my life, but I've never screwed a paraplegic."

TG: Too bad that's not an actual command-

VM: At times like that I wish I had a little sample of Mr. Burns, "Eh-xcellent." When

we were done playing, I saw her waiting by the side of the stage and just sort of hoisted her over my shoulder and took her upstairs. They had these showers upstairs, and I threw her down next to the shower she's hobbling on her little crutches - got my ass in the shower, and started soaping up, grabbed her hand and had her give me the best hand job I think I've ever had in my life. In this shower, where the entire crew of the club has just gathered at the door to witness this disgusting display of a paraplegic barely keeping her balance on one crutch as she's trying to jack off my dick in the shower.

me!" So I smack her even harder. "No, like this!" And she draws back her fist and she punches me right in the mouth. I'm thinking, "You fucking bitch!", and I just start pounding with my fists over and over again into her face. She starts squealing and screeching and tells me to bite on her tits, so I start biting her tits. And she starts in again, "Harder! No, harder! Harder!" So I bite into her so hard that blood comes out on both sides of my incisors. I'm leaving all these bite marks all over her tits, and there's blood dripping down her chest.

TG: Leaving your mark?



TG: Too bad you didn't get that one on video,

VM: Then afterwards, we went home to her friend's house. She kept telling me how she was so into S + M, so into being the victim. Well, I am always into satisfying a victim's whim, so we end up in this room and I start fucking her, but she can't feel anything from the waist down. I'm screwing her in the pussy, but then I realize that she can't feel shit so I start screwing her in the ass. She has no idea what I'm actually doing down there. She can't feel anything. I ask her, "How can you possibly get off on this?" and she says, "It's in my mind. The thought that you are doing it gives me orgasms in my mind." So I said, "Well fine, I'll pound away..." I just tore the hell out of her asshole with my dick.

After I came, she tells me, "Hit me." So I say, "You want me to hit you?" She says, "Yeah." So I hit her like this (makes a slapping motion) "No, hit me harder!" So I slapher a little harder. "No! I mean really hit

VM: Actually, come to think of it, I leave bite marks on lots of girls.

TG: Sort of as a stamp of approval?

VM: Yes, it's like, "You've been a naughty girl, and you deserve this."

When we were spent, and you can't get any more spent than this, I go, "Honey, I've gotta go piss." And she's lying on this bed, her useless legs splayed, blood trickling down her tits, her face just looking like ass, 'cause I had beat the crap out of her, and she goes, "Pee on me." And I go, "What?" And she goes, "Pee on me now." So, alright, I stand over her, hold my dick in my hand and start pissing on her from the top of her head all the way to the bottom of her feet. The whole time, she's writhing in my urine, screaming "Oh, yes, your piss is burning my wounds!"

TG: Oh, no.

VM: Then I just went, "You're okay!"

TG: "You're alright?"

VM: "You're not alright, but you're fine for tonight."

TG: And the whole time the rest of the band was in the other room, going...

VM: "Oh boy. We're gonna hafta call Quincy after this one."

TG: Well, that is substantially more detail than I had heard.

VM: That's because I was there.

TG: How about some of the bets you've engaged in on the road?

VM: Well, first was the bet with the Reverend Horton Heat during the '93 Sugarfix tour in Europe. Me and the Rev bet who could screw the most women in a two-week period, the final day being Valentine's day in Paris. And everyone in the Dwarves camp was telling Jim Heath, the Rev, "Dude, do not get in a bet like this with Vadge Moore. 'Cause he will screw anything, I mean *anything*, to win this bet."

TG: Everything counts!

VM: Well, they had to be human. And female. And all you had to do was get your dick in past the portals, there. All you had to do was pierce the labia sandwich there. He and I were really into just sitting around and drinking a lot of whiskey together. We really enjoyed getting loaded on whiskey. One night, just before the band started, I said, "Dude, do you have any idea what undertaking you are about to involve yourself in?" He just laughed and said, "Ah, don't worry about it Vadge, I can take it. I've taken better than you." And I said, "No, no. The question is have you taken it worse than me?"

So we had an actual starting line, the first night. There was a piece of tape we lined up at, "On your mark, get set...fuck!" And we both ran off and started hitting on women. But it's my theory that if you try too hard, you look desperate and you don't get shit. It's when you hold back and act like you don't give a shit that you end up with the pussy. But we couldn't do that. We had to keep hitting hard, 'cause we had two weeks to go. That night, it came down to he and I, and two fat girls. One was hugely fat, and the other was thinner but just so unattractive you can't believe it. Her face looked like it had been used like a nuclear waste dump. The really fat one was just grossly fat, and both her ass cheeks would probably fit on that sofa over there.

Of course, they're friends, so we end up going back to their house that night. Jim and the girl with the nuclear waste face go off into some room, and me and the hugely fat woman end up in another room. I'm sitting there thinking, "Well, gotta do it." So I just started smashing down the tequila as fast as I could, but not so much that I couldn't get it up. And knowing what I had to do, I got it in and got it taken care of. I even got off, which was amazing. The next morning Jim Heath comes out, it must be eight in the morning, totally hung over, and he just comes staggering out. The whale next to me is totally passed out. I'm lying on my back, and Jim comes walking over and says, "Didja?" And I just go, "What do you think?" And he just makes this face like (simulates agony) "Oh, no..." Because he hadn't! Because he didn't believe that I would! So he ended up having to go back in the room with this hideous bitch...

TG: With a hangover!

VM: Exactly!

TG: Without even the benefit of the drunk!

VM: Exactly! And then later, we had to go meet the tour bus, and he just looked at me, "You are one scary motherfucker, Vadge."

TG: So, you won?

VM: Oh, I won.

TG: Was it all just on your word?

VM: Oh, there had to be witnesses. It had to be verifiable. There was the Jim Heath Camp, and the Vadge Moore Camp. Some people were Camp Heath, and some were Camp Moore. It had to be with a girl you had never met before.

So it was the last night in Paris, France. Marky De Sade had some girl who wanted to screw him, but he spurned her advances because he was in Camp Moore. So she ended up screwing me that night in this beautiful hotel room in Paris.

Hewhocannotbenamed was in the room next to us, and since this girl was my game-making point, he and his slut were asked to confirm it. His girl - who was Italian, I think - said, "All we hear all night long was mucha *screaming* and mucha *groaning*. Alla night long, nonstop, never stop the screaming and the groaning." So Vadge wins.

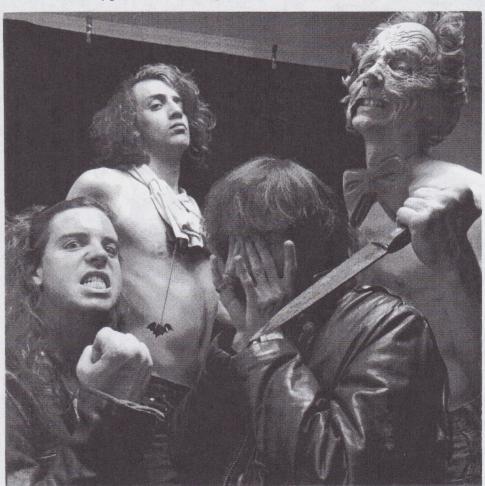
Generally, when you're on the road with the Dwarves, there's this idea that you're *the Dwarves*, and that you've gotta get some drugs and pussy. Teenage women and free cocaine. Or, if not teenage, than at least something that's not so old that it has to take its teeth out before it gives you a blowjob.

But if you're in the Dwarves, you've gotta understand that you have to live up to this legacy.

TG: How about you and Rex and the ugliest girl competition?

VM: Oh, man. My god. You know, I thought I

this really ugly girl in some town, but on the last night of the tour, in Seattle...oh my god, Rex just pulled out the ugliest...(shudders) This girl had been pursuing me all night long. She was clearly a Moore Whore. That's what they call the really fucked up, sleazy, nasty women. 'Cause they know that if they hit on me, no problem. If I'm drunk enough, sure, I'll take it a few laps. She was hideous. She was hugely fat, in a really bizarre way. She was like Bluto, from Popeye, but without the mus-



YOU'LL NEVER MEET A FINER, MORE UPSTANDING COLLECTION OF LADS: Vadge Moore, Blag Dahlia, Salt Peter and the O.G. Stupid Baby Gone Mad himself, Hewhocannotbenamed; California, 1990.

photo: Robert Barclay.

had gotten it, I don't remember what town it was in...Jesus. The Ugliest Girl You Can Screw Competition. I could only have that competition with Rex because Lord knows Blag won't touch anything that...With Blag, if they don't look like some supermodel, then he's just not interested.

TG: Or, some teenage girl...

VM: Yeah, some teenage girl. Blag has an obsession about braces. It totally drives him crazy. Whereas I'd rather not get my willy caught in something like that. Anyway, I thought I had it made with Rex. I'd screwed

cles. She had these teeth that were *amazing*, all these sharpened vampire incisors but shooting out in different directions. Some were pointing up, some were down, and some were right on top of others.

TG: Nice. Snagglepuss.

VM: Oh, man. She was *hideously* ugly. And I thought, I've already made it, I've won. Why do I have to subject myself to this sick freak? So I stupidly went after this hot little blonde, who ended up not even screwing me. Rex took this disgusting whore back to a van somewhere, screwed her once, and then

screwed her AGAIN, which I don't know what the fuck...

TG: Does it make her uglier if you screw her twice?

VM: No, it just makes HIM uglier. I mean she was so hideous as it was, why'd he have to go and subject himself to another round...But he did, and so he won, hands down. I have to give it to him. I could have had her, since she was all over me, but I figured I already had it. I didn't think anyone in their right mind would... But then, Rex Everything is not in his right mind.

TG: And there was your very fancy ex who came to the club...

VM: And I buttfucked her in her front seat and sent her home. We got back together after that.

TG: Really?

VM: Yeah. I don't know. It's this power I have over women. It's uncanny.

TG: Didn't you once have to move out to get rid of one?

VM: We had a wonderful long distance affair. Then she moved out here, and after it became not so wonderful, I had to leave the house. She stayed, but through my machinations I got her booted out and moved back in.

TG: Speaking of that particular woman, you have this habit of picking a woman up in one place, and then moving her some other place and leaving her there for others to deal with.

VM: What has been known to happen is that girls who I've screwed on the road have been known to just come out from wherever they live. They just show up without any thought that I might actually have a steady screw when I'm there who wouldn't be too excited when some whore I screwed in Baltimore shows up at the end of the tour at a show in San Francisco. But that has happened a couple of times.

TG: Girls don't think that way.

VM: Yeah, they just think (talks in a moronic high voice) "He liked me." This one girl followed me around Germany. The second time she came around, and I was trying to get her away from me because I was busy already with some new pussy, she said to me, I'll never forget, "Don't you believe in love at first sight?" And I said, "How clueless can you possibly fucking be?"

That's how a lot of these women have been. Do they really think that one night - all sweaty in the fuckin' van, while I'm trying to keep the rest of the band members out so I can get my nut off on their stomach - is gonna turn into a love affair? What are these women thinking? It's just unbelievable...

TG: And they're not all teenagers, either...

VM: No, they're usually in their twenties, and some are even in their thirties. It's a case of "Daddy musta screwed you hard, baby, 'cause your mind's *all* messed up."

TG: Well, they're ripe for the plucking, as Howard Stern is so fond of pointing out.

VM: Yes, and now Howard Stern is single. We should get together.

TG: Yeah, you'll show him around...

VM: I'll show him what it's like, take him on a Vadge tour of the city, and get his willy wet.

TG: It seems like Dwarves stories always center around sex, drugs, or violence. Rex seems to be at the center of a lot of the violence.

VM: I've seen Rex kick ass a few times, yeah. Rex used to like to play naked. If you're going to replace Hewhocannotbenamed, and you don't have a mask, or some other schtick...Well, he had to play naked. And Rex has a gigantic cock. Rex's cock is huge, it's gigantic, it's monstrous. So, whenever we played, he played naked so he could let everybody see how big his dick was.

TG: Is that what it was? Advertising?

VM: I would assume so, as in "You want a piece of this?" Of course most women could probably only *take* a little piece. And one night, some guy was just totally obsessed with Rex's dick. While Rex is playing, he keeps reaching up and grabbing his balls and his dick. Me and Blag had pulled Rex aside earlier and said, "Look, please don't send someone to the hospital..." Rex has a history of violence and warrants and stuff like that.

TG: From being in other bands?

VM: From just being *Rex*. So we're like, "Please don't kill somebody. Please don't hurt anyone too bad, don't put anyone in the hospital. Because if you do, then you're gonna get thrown in jail, and the tour's gonna be over." So Rex is *trying*. I've seen the video. Rex is telling the guy, "Stop it! Get your hand off my dick!" And the guy just keeps persist-

ing and persisting in grabbing his dick and grabbing his balls. Finally, Rex pulled his guitar off and started beating the hell out of the guy with it 'til the guitar broke into two pieces. What apparently happened is that they found the guy curled up in a corner somewhere, bleeding, so they called 911. As they were carting the guy out on a stretcher, our roadie asked him, "What do you think of the Dwarves now?" And the guy goes, "It's not a Dwarves show 'til you bleed." Amazing!

But Rex has done that numerous times. There was one time in Austin, Texas, at the Liberty Lunch. This group of fans was really pissed, 'cause they said we only played what they claim was fifteen minutes. Now it's a notorious fact that Dwarves fans always think we only play five or fifteen minutes, even when we actually have sets that last anywhere from 20 to 40 minutes. But they always say, "You only played five minutes!" Well, these guys are pissed and they're yelling into our backstage area, trying to engage us in a fight. And me and Blag we're like, "Whatever...Fuck these guys. They're not even worth our while." But Rex is something different. He's a youngblood. He wants to kill. So he goes running out there. The next thing I know, Blag's got my arm and is going, "Vadge, we got a problem here, man. Rex is out in the parking lot about to fight six dudes. We gotta get out there." So we're like, "Oh shit!" and everybody grabs a guitar or a bottle or something and goes running out to the parking lot. These guys keep talking all this shit, and we're all standing around, and Rex has got this Stratocaster in his hand, and I've got a bottle, and Blag's got something...These guys are wearing our tshirts, too. They're wearing Blood, Guts and Pussy shirts. They're yelling, "You didn't play long enough! We drove all the way from San Antonio to see you!" And I'm like, "We don't care where you drove from, you fuckin' pussies. You came to see a Dwarves show. We play short sets. Get the fuck out of our face!" But they just can't let it go. Finally, Rex just looks at one of the biggest guys, and goes, "Alright, you want some of this? You want some of this? Let's go!" And the guy goes, "Yeah! Let's go!" And Rex just takes the guitar and smashes him upside the head with it, and then it's on. Six guys are jumpin' us. Marky de Sade gets hit over the head with a gallon of vodka and is knocked out. Me and Blag are just fighting whichever guy is nearest, and Rex goes chasing this guy out of the parking lot. I knocked one guy out, I saw Blag kick some guy in the face, then we were just using this one guy as a punching bag, Blag hitting him in the face and me hitting him on the back of his head, until he finally figures out a way to run away. Then we remember, "Okay. Marky's out, we need to get him to a

hospital right away. Where's Rex?" And we can't find him. Then we start hearing all this screaming.

What happened was, John from Flipper realized what was going on, and he saw Rex chase that one guy down. Well, when Rex chased the guy down, some of the guy's friends were following and cornered Rex in the parking lot, had him down on the ground, and were kicking his face in. So John from Flipper went running out there, and actually grabbed the neck of the guitar from the ground and started beating anyone he could get his hands on senseless. That's when me and Blag came on the scene, and we punched these guys and chased them away. We picked Rex up, and he was all bloody and fucked up, and he had this sorta glazed look in his eye. But when he saw the guy who had been kicking him in the face walking away, Rex started stumbling in his direction. He grabs the guitar neck from John and goes running up behind this guy, who's now talking to his girfriend, going, "Oh, man...That was a bad fight..." Totally blindsiding this guy, he hits him as hard as he can with the neck of the guitar. The guy just falls, his girlfriend starts screaming, and Rex just spits in her face, and yells, "Fuck you people!" and walks away.

Later, we end up at the emergency room, and the people we had been beating up were

in the same lobby. So a fight started happening in the lobby, and they had to call the police to come in and warn us all not to fight or they'd take us to jail.

TG: So I guess that covers Sex and Violence. Of course, I've heard *some* stories about drugs...and the search for Bruce Lee's grave...

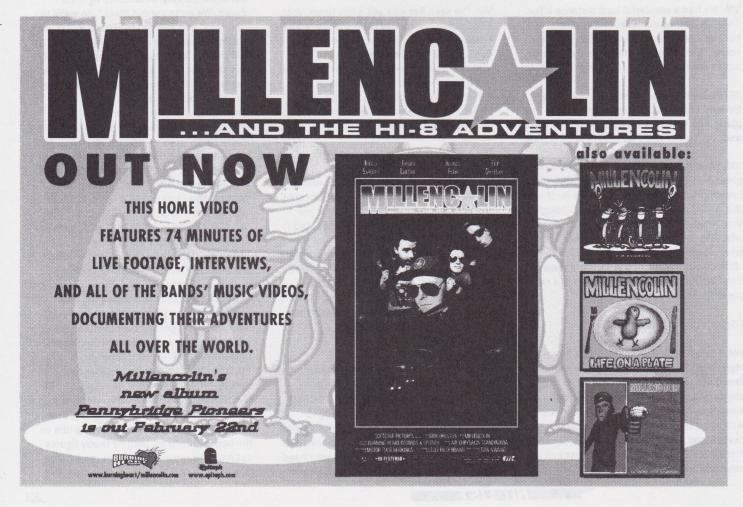
VM: Me and Blag were looking for Jimi Hendrix's grave. It was in Seattle. I think we ended up maybe finding Bruce Lee's grave, but he and I were so high, god, I have no idea...At that point, when you're so high on acid, what do you care? We were staying at Danny Bland's house. He was playing in a band called Cat Butt at the time, so this was in the early days of Sub Pop. And Gwar had their big truck out there, and we had just done a show. It was in this realy nice neighborhood, I can't remember how he had arranged it, but Cat Butt was living in a really nice section of Seattle. It was kinda Seattle's version of Pacific Heights, or Seattle's version of Marin County, and it was this nice house that they had just destroyed, and everyone from L7 to Nirvana, everybody was always out there partying. Our Dwarves van was parked not too far from the Gwar van. Blag was really high and feeling pranksterish, and our roadie Monterey Mark was passed out in

the van, half-naked, in all his tattooed glory. Blag decides to slide the van door open. The following morning, which was a Monday, all the mothers and fathers taking their kids to school had to pass by this open van and the disgusting display of this large, tattooed roadie snoring loudly enough to wake the neighborhood.

TG: You've played in a lot of bands over the years, and with some, things worked out, and with others...

VM: I enjoyed Flipper, touring with those guys. And the Cows, we had a great time with the Cows. They're really cool guys, especially Shannon, who is a twisted genius. Gwar was always fun to tour with. We always have fun with those guys. The Supersuckers, Blag always said they were a perfect combination of Motorhead and us. We took them out when nobody knew who the fuck they were, and when we were making 500, and they were only making 50, we'd throw 'em 200 to keep going. And Kyuss was another legendary band we took on tour.

We met Kyuss in Madison, Wisconsin when we were recording *Thank Heaven for Little Girls* at Butch Vig's studio. Butch Vig was, unfortunately, out of town that week recording a little record you might have heard



of, Nirvana's Nevermind. We still think he would have made a lot more money if he'd have stuck around to do our record. But we did the record with Doug Bolt, who is a great, great engineer. And we spent a long time in Madison, staying at this place called the Aloha Inn. Sub Pop was paying for it, so we're like, "Fuck yeah! If Sub Pop is paying, then I'm in." Every morning we would wake up after being in the studio till late at night. Then we'd go out to the studio, then do some lunch, then go back to the Aloha Inn, where we had what we called the Triumverate of Ecstasy, which was: do the hot tub, then do the sauna, then a dip in the pool. It was just living in luxury. We'd just put out Blood, Guts, and Pussy, and we were now recording our second album for Sub Pop. We were just fuckin' scumbag pieces of shit barely out of the gutter, and they were treating us like fuckin' royalty.

TG: And fighting your way back into the gutter, whenever possible...

VM: Yeah, yeah, right. We used to go to this bar, the Okay. They were big Dwarves fans, and they'd give us free Jägermeister and free beer all night long. One night I ended up finger-fucking some chick under the table with like nine people watching. Another night, we were coming into the bar from the studio, and going into the bar we see this marquee that says: "Kyuss - L.A. Metal" and we're like, "L.A. Metal? (groans) We're gonna kill these guys. Let's go in here, get drunk, and beat these guys up, or fuck them up, or throw things at them." So we go in, and then it's Kyuss. And they start playing "God Damn Motherfucking Son of a Bitch" or something, and we're thinking, "Wow, these guys are actually pretty good." We went in expecting...

TG: To go kill Poison...

VM: Exactly. Actually I love Poison now, but then I would have killed those guys. It's amazing what kitsch can do for someone. But we enjoyed Kyuss, and after their second song, apparently, they saw us, and they were big Dwarves fans. The lead singer, John Garcia, goes, "We wanna play a song right now, it's called 'Drug Store' by the Dwarves." So later, they came off stage, and they yell out, "You guys are the Dwarves, we love you!" And we start hanging out with them and drinking with them, and we find out they're on this major label budget. They have all this money. So our minds go "Ching!" "You guys have money, huh?" Blag says, "Where are you staying?" And they say, "Right down the way." And we go, "Let's go over there!" And of course they go, "Yeah! Alright!" But later they start thinking, "We can't bring the

Dwarves to our hotel, that's really a bad idea. They're gonna wreck everything and destroy everything and it's gonna be terrible." But we say, "Come on, lets get a buncha beer and a buncha booze and go back to the hotel and bring some whores with us and see what can happen." We ended up just going back and hanging out, drinking with them. But the more drunk they got, the more uptight and weird they got, to the point that they ended up destroying their own hotel room, in lieu of us doing it. Because they thought they'd better do it before we did. They ended up throw-

TG: "A part of us," I like that...

VM: It's like the lyrics to "Fuckhead": "Us, you're not us, you're a fuckhead."

TG: As for Blag...In many stories, Blag almost seems to be the most mild-mannered of the Dwarves.

VM: He kinda ended up having to be. When I first started in the band, Salt Peter was the calm, cool, sensible Dwarf who took care of business. When Salt Peter left, someone had

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-Vadge Moore

ing the phone through the window, throwing the lamp out after it, smashing everything, pissing on the walls, and doing all this shit because they didn't want to be one-upped by the Dwarves. They were afraid that if they looked like pussies, then we would end up burning down the hotel. Meanwhile, me, Blag, and Hewho are sitting back, going, "Man, these guys are really fucking up this place." So that ended up being a very strong friendship to this very day. And of course Rex became a part of us.

to fill his shoes. And at first Blag didn't really, but in the past few years he's become more down-to-earth. Because when you're involved with this crew, with this kind of insanity: Vadge Moore, Hewhocannotbenamed, everybody who's been involved with the Dwarves...it's just been this incredible potpourri of degeneracy. I mean, who would want to have to deal with people like this? And have to deal with the business side of it all. It really takes a strong, intelligent guy to do that.

TURBO! TRASH! FRENZY!: The Dwarves rock Incredibly Strange Wrestling, 1999



TG: Were you there when the Telephone Booth incident occurred?

VM: No. But Blag called me at my girlfriend's house, and he goes, "I wanna come over there right now." And me and my girlfriend had finally got all her roomates out, and we thought we were gonna have this candlelit dinner, some wine, some cocaine, some major sex. In the middle of this, Blag calls and says, "Dude, I just beat up [insert name of former drummer of seminal L.A. punk band here] and you gotta hide me." So he had to come over to my girlfriend's house for a while. This guy had done Blag a disservice, and was hanging around a pay phone near [insert local nightclub in out-of-the-way neighborhood], and Blag saw him and just beat him down in the phone booth, which was an excellent move. I would have done the same thing.

TG: Of course YOU would...

VM: Yeah, but I'm a motherfucker.

TG: Well, I'll certainly keep my mother away from you. About Hewho, when I asked him why he wears a mask, I realized it was more a question of why everyone else *doesn't* wear masks. (laughing) He seems a little mild-mannered, almost. But then someone who gets onstage naked except for a mask...

VM: Well, there've been times where it has helped a lot to be in a mask and naked. I remember one time we were playing in L.A. at English Acid. Hewho was playing with his mask on, as usual. And y'know, LA bouncers are notorious assholes...

TG: Was it like, white-shirt-and-black-bowtie-LA-bouncer, or...

VM: No, this was more like the black t-shirt rolled up with a pack of cigarettes-type LA bouncer. And these guys were total pricks. And here we are, Blood, Guts & Pussy had just come out, and we weren't famous. There were only maybe a hundred people there to see us. So these guys were like, "Aaah, lame San Francisco band, fuck this." So we come on stage. Hewhocannotbenamed is naked, and Blag's spitting, and there's all the usual shit. So what they had set up was, not a bouncer for the audience, but a bouncer for each band member. Because they thought we were the threat. Which...they were correct. But I was pissed about this, and I look around and realize that they've got us surrounded. So we played like maybe five, ten minutes, and then they're freaking out because Hewho is naked. So they're going, "You guys are cut off!" Finally, what we ended up doing after

ten minutes was just break everything. When we did that, our bouncers started looming over each one of us. I saw my bouncer come up toward me and I just took my bass drum and threw it right at his chest, and then I ran and hid as quick as I could. 'Cause this guy was huge! He would have killed me. And Hewho just threw his guitar down and left the stage, and Blag ran outside. Salt Peter, I don't know what happened to him. He can just go somewhere and put on a nice coat, and he would be respectable, almost. But Hewho immediately ran backstage, threw his pants on, took his mask off, and just sat there. As soon as I peeked out from where I was hiding, I see this bouncer asking Hewho, "Where'd that naked guy go? I saw him come this way!" And Hewho just goes, "No, no. I didn't see anyone." "You didn't see anybody?" "No...Well, some weird guy that was drunk, he went that way." The guy goes running off. That's one of the great things about being Hewho, just put on some clothes, take off the mask...and you're instantly incognito.

TG: In hindsight, do you wish you wore a mask?

VM: No.

TG: You need to be recognizable.

VM: Yes, especially since I'm the drummer. I'm way in the back, so...The more recognized I can be by the women, the better.

TG: So was Hewho just not concerned with all that?

VM: No, he was just more concerned with putting on a good show, being twisted, doing a lot of cocaine, speed, or crack, and drinking a lot of whiskey. We all went through our phases. I don't remember Blag having a crack phase, but...I went through a crack phase, too. But I was nowhere near as degenerate as Hewhocannotbenamed. You get Hewhocannotbenamed mixed with crack and prostitutes...Watch out!

TG: Things get a little ugly?

VM: A little messy, but hey, who am I to talk?

TG: I don't have the best dirt on Blag, I'm sure. He's a little more secretive. But I have seen him when someone gets on stage with him...

VM: Oh yeah. Don't tread on Blag's turf. And if you do, and he gets rid of you, and you come back for more, and he gets rid of you again, and you come back...You can be sure that I will jump through the drums and beat

the fuck out of you. The Dwarves philosophy on that is this: on tour, you're like a wolf pack. The Dwarves were always considered like Viking Berserkers, pillaging and raping and doing what we do. And you have to watch each other's backs. The basis of what we are all about is that we are a tribe of warriors. Sexual, drug-addled warriors who will always take care of each other. I've seen other bands that don't have that. We always hated those bands we called shoegazers, without egos. You reach a certain pinnacle of success, but then you don't follow it through with the sort of egomaniacal intensity that any real rock band should carry.

TG: Success should lead to excess.

VM: Absolutely. Well, excess leads to success. It always has. And if you're excessive, you're going to get the attention of a lot of people.

TG: Well, that's the snake that eats its own tail, right there.

VM: Really, the cyclical nature of being. It's very Wagnerian. We're the Wagnerian opera of rock and roll. Complete with all the blood, and the rape and the pillaging and destruction...

TG: And the Valkyries. I don't know if a band like the Dwarves would do well starting out now. It seems like a forgotten world that the band came out of.

VM: People are too concerned about being on MTV...You have all these rock bands like Blink 187 or whatever, that seem to thrive on the "kinda crazy, but nice guys" image. They're wacky, and zany, as opposed to dangerous and evil. People always compare us to GG Allin...But I can only think of a couple of instances when I'd agree. One was when Sub Pop had us play the New Music Seminar. They had us headlining on the stage with all the Sub Pop bands, like Big Chief, and all this shit, and MTV was there. Supposedly, all these record company guys and producers were there to see the Dwarves, as an up-andcoming band, "Yeah, these guys look really crazy, but they're awesome, come see them..." I'll never forget, we got so fucked up. We were in New York for a couple of days, did photos with Mike Levine. And we were just getting so fucked up, me and Hewho especially, just drunk and high on cocaine. So Hewho comes out onstage with just diapers on. But, as he's playing, the diapers come off. So now he's naked. Well, one of the bouncers, a huge black guy about 6'2, about 230 pounds, grabs a towel and tries to wrap it around Hewho's body while he's playing. Now, if you've ever seen

Hewhocannotbenamed play, you know he squiggles around like a snake in heat. So the bouncer's trying to wrap this towel around him so that the club doesn't get sued for exposing minors to genitalia or something. Hewho finally got sick of it, and climbed to the top of this PA speaker that was about fifteen feet above the crowd. As he was playing he looked down, and there was this mass of record company dorks, and Hewho just had to pee, so he leaned forward so that his dick was out over the edge of the PA and just started urinating over the entire... I remember looking up and seeing this, and thinking, "Well, there goes our chance to make real money..." (laughing)

TG: "Guess we're not getting discovered tonight."

VM: But, yeah, we always got compared to GG Allin, and certainly I can understand those comparisons. GG Allin was really out of his box, but he wrote some really good songs and did some great stuff live. The Dwarves have written nothing but good songs, especially Blag. He wrote some amazing songs, and has done sor for the Dwarves all these years, so we have backed up insanity with really good music.

TG: With great records.

VM: Yeah, with great albums. And every time we went in the studio...The first time we went in the studio was really the first time I'd recorded with a band where I knew the material was actually going to come out on vinyl, or CD, or whatever. Even back then, in the Blood, Guts & Pussy days, it was always calculated - not calculated in the sense of fake, but calculated in the sense that - we wanna make a record that sounds this way, and once you put the record on, it starts from the first song and it takes you someplace all the way till the record's done. Which is usually 20 minutes or so...but, regardless, it takes you somewhere.

TG: I can see where people might get GG Allin, but to me that shows they're not thinking about the music. In attitude and style, I think the music is much more akin to the Misfits, not the Murder Junkies.

VM: Yes, certainly the Misfits. Especially *Blood, Guts and Pussy*. When I first joined the Dwarves, the two records I listened to before we recorded were *Earth AD* and *Walk Among Us.* Blag just said, "Dude, play like this.



Listen to these records and play like this." And I did. And ultimately, I think we resemble the Cramps, too, and early Black Flag.

TG: I think the line gets drawn to GG Allin, because he is further along on the line of excess, closer to the point of being simply disgusting. But I don't see that in your live show. In your personal behavior, maybe...

VM: Well, some crazy stuff happened. I remember we opened for the Rollins (choke) Band, excuse me...The Rollins (gag) Band...Excuse me, I hate to say that name.

TG: Here, just say "Luxury SUV," a few times. That helps me clear my throat sometimes.

VM: Yeah, we were opening for them in Houston, Texas. When we hit the stage, it was packed. There were just as many people out there to see us. Somebody always told me that when the Dwarves went on stage, it was like a nuclear bomb going off. I remember clicking into "Backseat of My Car", then came down with my arms, and my whole back went out on me. But I still. despite all the pain, got through the set. It ended up being the most bizarre set, because the Texas audience - Texas is just fantastic, I love people in Texas, not just 'cause the women fuck and suck and are fantastic, but 'cause the audience and the kids in the crowd are just totally insane and willing to do anything to enjoy themselves. I look down at Blag, and I see that there is this girl's head bobbing up and down in front of him. He's standing there, stationary, which is strange, because usually Blag runs around on the stage. But he's standing there, and some girl is sucking his dick the entire time. And in comparison, you could never suck GG Allin's dick like that without a microscope and some tweezers.

TG: And why would you? That's the thing, there is no level of sexiness to GG Allin.

VM: Except that, what I have discovered over these years is that women are attracted to bad boys, ever since the days of James Dean and Jim Morrison. Women are so attracted to bad boys, no matter what they look like or how they're built. If they think you're evil and bad, they'll come. Which to me is the perfect Darwinian law. As it is in nature, if you're the tough, crazy dominant male, women are attracted to that.

TG: So if you intimidate other men, you're attractive.

VM: Certainly, or other women. Or attract

other women. Which is the whole point. There is a very fine line between intimidation and attraction.

TG: It seems like because the set is so abridged, the energy gets built up, but never expelled, never quite achieving the climax that is demanded to bring it back down.

VM: The Dwarves have never done, and will never do, an encore. I hope. At least not to my knowledge...

TG: That'll be after the epic, symphonic Dwarves record.

VM: It'll never happen. There's never gonna be an encore. It ends too soon, the crowd is left wanting, and they wanna start a riot because of it.

TG: Right, they're still all riled up. All that energy is still in the room, they haven't worked it off at all.

VM: There was a great night after *Thank Heaven For Little Girls* was released and Salt Peter had left, and to replace Salt Peter we had to get a bass player and a second guitar player - that's how great Salt Peter is, he's one of the best bass players I've ever worked with. Salt Peter and Rex Everything are two of the greatest bass players walking this earth. So when he left, we got Crash Landon on guitar, and Eric Generic on bass. Eric Generic looked like an eighties heavy metal dude. The first time we tried him out was at the Coconut Teaszer in Los Angeles.

TG: Oh, God. Home of eighties evil, and the banana daiquiri.

VM: Yeah, everybody try and look like Lita Ford. We hit the stage, and it was sold out. Now first of all, the Coconut Teaszer is not that big, but there was a line around the block trying to get in.

TG: Plus they sell a lot of room that is in the *other* room, where you can't see or hear the band.

VM: That's L.A. for you. So everyone's pissed off, 'cause they're trying to get close to the stage, they're trying to see us, and they start taking out their agressions on Eric Generic. Our punk rock audience looks at Eric Generic and thinks, "L.A. Metal, he's a 'faggot', kill him!" Not realizing that Eric Generic...Apparently, in high school he was one of the greatest wrestlers ever at his school." He was a big dude, too. But he had this poofy, poodle hair, and these purple pants. We used to call him the Purple Pirate.

Then, as a joke he'd found this giant alarmclock thing like Flava Flav used to wear, so he'd know what time it wasn't. We used to go, "The Purple Pirate knows what time it ain't!" It was just a joke, we thought it was a lot of fun, we thought it would be great. This punk rock audience was accepting us, and one thing the Dwarves were about back then was not being accepted, was hatred - we just wanted everyone to hate us because we hated them. So we thought if we get this heavy metal-looking dude on stage looking this ridiculous, our crowd's gonna hate him. We didn't realize how much they were gonna hate him. Everyone just started attacking him, live onstage. And he goes, "What, you're attacking me?" And he pulls off his bass and just starts smashing these guys.

TG: The stage there is only about a foot off the ground...

VM: Yeah, and the place is just packed, so the audience is slammed in there to capacity, so stuffed in that they're practically dying of thirst and lack of air. Meanwhile Crash Landon and the Purple Pirate are smashing people with their guitars because people are attacking them. So huge fights start breaking out, and eventually it turns into a situation with me and Hewho playing while Blag, Crash Landon, and Eric Generic fight off the crowd. Blood is just flying everywhere. Finally, they shut off the power. I just remember standing up in the middle of that thinking, "Yeah!" I kicked over my drums and went to the front of the stage after all this violence and insanity had happened, and I'm thinking, "What do I do now?" So I pulled down my pants and showed them my dick. But that wasn't good enough. So I turn around and showed them my ass. But that wasn't good enough either. So I took the drumstick and shoved it as far up my ass as I possibly can, and sorta wiggle it around. And the crowd just starts screaming, and a guy jumps onstage and starts to lick where the drumstick is going in my ass. Finally, I just pulled it out and turned around going, "Ow. That hurt."

TG: Maybe that is a little GG Allin.

VM: Yeah, it is, but I just didn't know what else to do because the whole situation got so extreme and so crazy. Then we went backstage and listened as the crowd tore the place apart.

TG: Cool. That's what they get for trying to use an S and a Z in their name. You're actually from the Bay Area, aren't you?

VM: Oh, yeah.

TG: And the specific area where you're from is famous for turning out degenerates because the level of loitering that a teenager can achieve in that area tends to produce some interesting habits and foster those interests. Would you say that's accurate?

VM: Yes.

TG: Long afternoons after school, or in lieu of school...

VM: I was gonna say..."School?" Is that the thing sorta like work, where you have to get up early and go somewhere you don't want to go. I kinda remember that.

TG: So what started your interest in music?

VM: What sent me into punk rock was KISS. Really, I think KISS is the ultimate punk rock band. They present a hedonistic view of the world, but as a drummer what attracted me was that simple beat. Peter Criss was extremely simple. I love the simplicity in that. But then I was reading Hit Parader, and Rock Scene, and Creem, and I started seeing this band called the Sex Pistols, and I thought, I've gotta buy this record. When I got Never Mind the Bollocks, I thought it was one of the greatest records I'd ever heard. And I became a punk rocker as soon as I heard that album. And then, of course, I got into Iggy Pop and the Clash. But it wasn't until 1980 that I heard Black Flag's Jealous Again, and then I went to see "Decline of Western Civilization", and like a lot of people my age I really got turned on by it. I saw that movie, and thought, "Wow. This is it. This is me." My life changed at that moment, and it hasn't really changed since that moment. This is anarchy. This is insanity. This is beautiful.

TG: And then you found out the ginchy lifestyle that went along with it...

VM: I'd started playing drums at a really early age, like with chopsticks on my mom's pots and pans. Then she bought me a drumkit when I was about eight. So I'd been making up little bands forever, and my first drum hero was Peter Criss. We

played early rock and roll songs, some Elvis Presley, and Jerry Lee Lewis. But then I started discovering Black Flag, and Jim Carroll, and I just realized...All my friends were into Led Zeppelin and AC/DC, which I love, but I realized there was another level I could go to. And, we could have a band. So I got all my friends interested in the Sex Pistols and Iggy Pop. Then I said, "Let's start a band. If these guys can, then we can." It's the archetypal punk rock thing. So I did. We had a band called Crypt. Then a band called the Rat Boys. The Rat Boys were written up in Maximum Rock and Roll.

TG: Well, you'll never get written up in MRR again! You are so not MRR material.

VM: Who cares? Good. MRR, the last thing they did on the Dwarves was the cover story, which was cool. But it was so funny, because after they ran that article they got all these letters saying, "The Dwarves aren't as nihilistic and nasty as we thought they'd be." Because Tim Yohannan came to our house. And we know Tim, so we just sat around and got drunk and had a little discussion, like you and I are having now. And later on people criticized that interview, saying we weren't nasty enough.

TG: They wanted you to be more what they expected of you, as Dwarves.

VM: Yeah, so they could yell at us and say we were terrible.

TG: They didn't get enough ammo from the article.

VM: Right. So I've been doing this, in bands, since I was eight. And I still have my hearing, which is amazing.

TG: Well, that is amazing,

that
you're
not the
tinnitus
posterboy.
Does it help to be behind the guitars?

VM: Not really, because they're always right next to my ears. So I'm always between Hewho right there, and Rex Everything right there...

TG: And now Wholly Smokes...

VM: Yeah. Oh my god, yeah. One of the greatest guitar players I ever played with. Wholly Smokes is phenomenal.

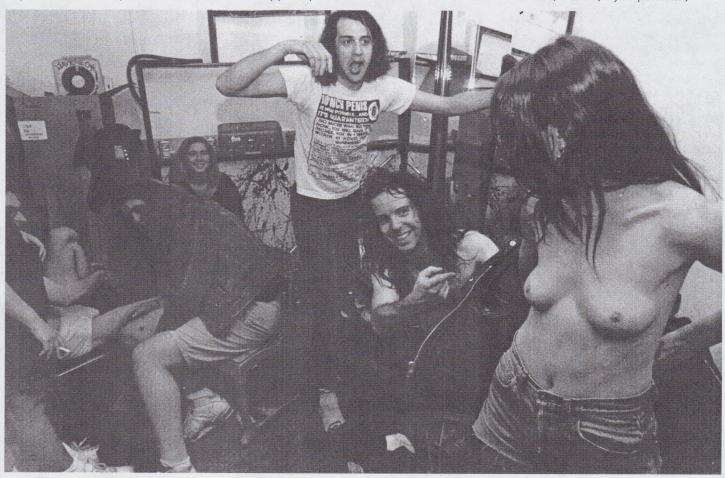
TG: Did you ever play with him in any other bands?

VM: No, but I knew him from the early days of San Francisco punk rock, from the

vodka. Then you'd better get out of his way. I know that a certain friend of both of ours, Mr. Biafra, had a bit of a situation when Wholly Smokes decided that every beer in the cooler had to be thrown, full, at Mr. Biafra. Other than that moment, he would have been like, "How's it goin', Jello." No bad blood between 'em. It's just this Dr. Jekyl and Mr. Hyde thing. He was blacked out. It's part of being a Dwarf. The personality just lapses in and out of conscious-

TG: Tell me about your final show with the Dwarves, at Incredibly Strange Wrestling at the Fillmore.

VM: Actually, Jello told me there that it was the best, or the most punk rock set he'd seen us do in about ten years. There was a lot of cocaine involved with that show. I recall Hewho's amp going out pretty much in the middle of that show. And he pretty much said, "Fuck it, my amp's blown,



DRUGS! ROCK WITH A REALLY BIG "R"! GRATUITOUS NUDITY!: Hewho (prior to his untimely pseudo-demise) chats with Poison Idea's drummer while Blag and Vadge enjoy the display put on by Sharon Needles — back in the heady days of 1991.

photo: James Rexroad

Drunk Injuns and Los Olvidados, they were killer. They opened up for everybody. I think Mike once described them to me as "punk rock whores." Just give them beer and let them wreck the place.

TG: Right, that was back in the days when...You know, come to think of it, it seems like Wholly Smokes lived the most destructive portion of his life previous to his stint in the band.

VM: Yeah, so he was totally ready to join the Dwarves. Wholly Smokes is a very intense individual, very intelligent, very sharp, except when he drinks a lot of ness and does crazy and wild things. The first rock show I ever went to was Cheap Trick opening for KISS at the Cow Palace. It was the night Elvis Presley died, August 16, 1977. Then I saw Romeo Void and the Jim Carroll Band at the Warfield. The Contractions opened.

TG: The Contractions, who later opened for Duran Duran at Henry J. Kaiser.

VM: Yeah, yeah. That's them. Then the first real punk rock show I went to was in '79 or '80. It was Flipper, the Red Rockers, and the Dead Kennedys. where's the cocaine?" So he took off backstage. I remember at one point Blag yelling for Hewho to just pretend to be playing...

TG: 'Cause he was standing there pulling on his dick, that's why...

VM: If you can't play your guitar, just play with your dick. It's amazing, after all these years, what people do understand about the Dwarves. We used to get run out of town, not paid, beat up...Now people expect these kinds of hijinks. Like when we did South by Southwest, and we'd been there not too many months before, and we'd played a pretty healthy 40-minute set. We were all fucked up on coke and booze.

And Blag had this girl in the audience who kept grabbing his crotch. Now Blag is not one to deny a young lady her due, so he's shoving his crotch in her face. After a few minutes of this, she grabs the zipper of his black stretch pants, and undoes it and starts sucking his cock. And now Blag is thinking, "We're all really fucked up...Do I string this set out into some measure of mediocrity, or do I take this girl who's sucking my dick and end the set on a high note?" I think, in Blag's head, it became "I've got head, I'm outta here..." So he wrecks the drums, grabs this girl out of the crowd, takes her backstage, then out to the back. There's this carload of Dwarves fans out back, who want Blag to come party with them. So Blag says, "Okay, but take me back to my hotel first, so I can screw this girl." So they took off, and Blag's in the backseat of this car, getting head, while the people in the front are videotaping it. The next day, that footage was on the internet. Footage of that girl's face in Blag's crotch...

TG: So yeah, the internet has been a useful publicity tool, basically. Word of mouth!

VM: Yeah, so to speak...

After studying these stories over and over, a vision forms in my mind of two sides squared off in a static-charged stalemate. On one side the band, still dripping sweat onto the dusty blacktop from their blistering but cursory set. On the other side the fans, jittery with eager and unspent aggression. Is it possible that this desire to go mano-a-mano with the band is merely an extreme form of fan worship? The ultimate tribute may be an Ultimate Fighting Championship between the Dwarves and their fans. The Dwarves get in a lot of fights in Texas, for instance. And yet nowhere are they as rabidly loved by their fans. This defies coincidence.

At times, it is difficult to understand the Dwarves' seemingly endless capacity for shitting away potential. They seem, in the course of their long and sordid career, to have actively shunned success. Where does all this refusal get you? As a band philosophy it seems shortsighted, but without their misbehavior, violence, debauchery, and substance abuse they wouldn't really be the Dwarves. I can't say if something like this would work for a band starting out today. As a strategy to gain commercial success, it seems a bit flawed. But it has made the Dwarves a bright spot among the drab detritus of the '80's punk rock scene. By evolving into the '90's, and beyond, they become the Once and Future Dwarves. May they live long and strong.





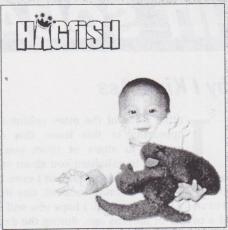




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HIT SQUAD



Why I Kick Ass

nlike some of the other columns that will be appearing in this issue, this one will not attempt to anger or upset you. Nor will it attempt to enlighten you about or "hip" you to anything. In fact, it doesn't even have much of a point. It just relates a funny incident, one that I am compelled to share with the world. I hope you will enjoy it. It all started a couple of months ago, during the days leading up to the '99 Confederacy of Scum Supershow, which was held



here in my hometown of Hostile City, USA (aka Philadelphia). I'm going to assume that the majority of *Hit List* readers are familiar with the COS, since they've been previously discussed in Thee Whiskey Rebel's column and in the letters section, not to mention in the huge piece in *HL* #2, so I'm not going to further describe the group or their

annual event. (By the way, I am not a member of the COS; it's not that I'm trying to distance myself from them, because I'm not, but I don't want people to get the impression that I'm claiming to be a part of something I'm not.) To get back to my story around the same time. husband/partner in

crime Larry and I were putting together C14 #16. We had just secured an interview with Missy Hyatt, a well-known wrestling valet/manager. (Some of you may not know who she is, but among the people we know she is certainly well-known, if not infamous.) Before we had even set a date for the interview, The Cosmic Commander of Wrestling (Rancid Vat/Johnny Casino's Easy Action) put in a request for an autographed picture, a request we promised we'd try to fulfill. Little did I know that Cosmo's request would indirectly start off the domino effect that escalated into what I have come to call "the panty incident." (Hah, I can't believe I worked a domino reference in - and I wasn't even trying.) But once again, I'm getting ahead of myself.

Fast forward to the night before the first night of the Supershow. Larry and I went to a pre-show party at a local bar that was attended by a lot of COS people (the ones who came to

town a day early), people from other bands that were playing the Supershow, and a group of invited guests. I downed quite a few glasses of beer that night (and it really only takes a few glasses to get me buzzed), but I remember sitting next to Marla Vee (Rancid Vat co-founder/guitarist) while behind us my husband talked wrestling with Alan King and the Widowmaker (of Hellstomper and Cocknoose fame, respectively). At some point in their conversation the topic of Missy Hyatt must have come up, and I remember being called over and asked the following question by the Widowmaker: "Does your husband have the balls to ask Missy Hyatt to autograph a pair of her panties for me?" Not having ever been faced with such a question, but having known Larry as long and as intimately as I have, I said that yes, he probably did have the balls to ask her anything - up to and including that. I believe after answering the question, I went back to my conversation with Marla. I don't recall hearing anything else about Missy or her panties that night until Larry and I got home and he mentioned that Widowmaker, probably assuming that we wouldn't be able to secure such a delicate and private item, claimed after I left the conversation that he would get a tattoo that read "Larry and Leslie kick ass" if we came through with the panties. That thought tickled me to no end, and I told Larry that I thought we should definitely ask her if the interview went well. We had tentatively arranged to meet with her the next day, a Friday, but something came up and we had to re-schedule it for the following Wednesday.

At the Supershow Friday night Widowmaker again asked me if I was certain that we would have the cojones to ask her to give us a piece of her underwear. I told him that while I wouldn't presume to speak for Larry, I could guarantee him that I did in fact have the

cojones (figuratively speaking, anyway) to ask for her underwear. I also told him he shouldn't be so quick to assume that I couldn't get the job done. This little display of assertion must have amused the Widowmaker, because he proceeded to tease me about it all night. Which was OK by me. I am a fan of his, and I pride myself on being able to verbally hold my own in any situation, so I was happy to spar back and forth with him. I would hear my

name called, and when I turned around there he was: "Don't forget about those panties." He didn't have to worry, since I don't forget that easily. We continued to keep this interchange going on Saturday night as well, and at some point Larry fell out of the picture. It turned into a battle of the sexes of sorts, with him questioning my ability to achieve the task he had laid before me, while I kept it going by saying that he shouldn't concern himself with my abilities. Instead, he should start saving his beer money and picking out a good place for "my tattoo." At some point that night he said one of the funniest things I've ever heard, with a totally straight face: "Well I'll tell you what, Leslie, I've never claimed to be an expert on women. Hell, I don't understand 'em half the time, but I reckon it's not a normal occurrence for a woman to give another woman her underwear just because she asked for it." I had to agree with him on that one, but nonetheless I told him that this didn't mean it was impossible. Now

As of this moment I'm still awaiting word that he's gotten the ink, and at that point I'll send him the panties

that it's all over, I will freely admit that at the time I really didn't know if I would be able to get her to give me an autographed pair of her panties or not, but I wasn't gonna back down or let him know that. By the end of Saturday night, I had started to believe that it was possible for me to pull it off. Before the night was over, though, Widowmaker was able to add one more twist - we suddenly realized that if I did get the panties, he had to get the tattoo, whereas if I didn't I wouldn't have to pay any price. So he decided that I'd have to give him a pair of my own panties if I lost. I readily agreed to that stipulation, because quite frankly I thought he was letting me off easy. (Compared to the pain and permanance of his having to get a tatoo, what's giving up a pair of panties?) So we shook on it.

But the verbal jousting didn't end with the Supershow. Oh, no. Widowmaker called me no less than three times between Sunday and Wednesday, just to needle me a little more (good-naturedly, of course). The last time he called he left a message while we were in the car driving to NY to meet Missy. By the time we got to her apartment, I was 100% determined to meet both of my self-appointed tasks, completing the interview and leaving with the panties. I won't go into all the details - after all, a girl has to keep some secrets-but the short version of this part of the story is that our interview with Missy went really, really well. She was very nice to us, and not only signed a hilarious personalized message to Cosmo but gave me an autographed pair of her panties (a very nice pair, I might add - a lacy thong from Victoria's Secret) and even volunteered to pose for photos with the panties that I was planning to send to Widowmaker as proof of my ass-kicking abilities. She made me swear not to give him the panties until he got the tattoo, and I've kept my promise.

As of this moment I'm still awaiting word that he's gotten the ink, and at that point I'll send him the panties. Shortly after sending him

LESLIEGOLDMAN

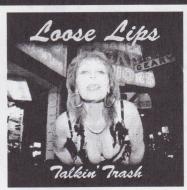
the photos I offered to re-negotiate the bet, since I'm a fairly rational woman. I realized that he probably wasn't expecting me to come home with her undies, and that being forced to get "Leslie Kicks Ass" tattooed on your ass because you lost a bet you made while drinking might be carrying things a little too far. But being the man that he is, Widowmaker said he would honor the original terms - and not get it covered up for at least a year - and I believe that he will. While I'm on this subject I would like to state publicly that I greatly respect the fact that he didn't even try to weasel out of the deal. I never thought I'd see the day when a man got my name tattooed on him, especially one that I've never had a romantic entanglement with. I'd never let Larry tattoo my name on him - I'd be afraid it would jinx our marriage - but since my relationship with Widowmaker has thus far (and for the foreseeable future) consisted of friendship and harmless flirting, I predict that nothing bad will come from this little adventure. (Or course, any women he dates over the course of the next year might not think this story is funny or like me very much. On the other hand, he conveniently has an "in" with women named Leslie.) In the last e-mail he sent to me on this subject, he said that next time he would come up with an even more complex and difficult challenge for me. In keeping with my newfound bravado I told him if he wanted to tempt fate a second time, then he should just bring it on, dar-

I'm the editor of Carbon 14 magazine. You can contact me at C14/PO Box 29247, Philadelphia, PA 19125.

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HIT SQUAD

A Pint of McGinniss, Please

Where are all the stupid people from?

And how'd they get to be so dumb?

—NOFX

question on my mind more often than not, made flesh in Fat Mike's magnum opus, *The Decline* — which may very well be the "2112" of punk rock. Or the "Rime Of The Ancient Mariner" at the very least... But the question at hand isn't so much how people who listen to Korn, wear outsized JNCO's ["Like trousers, like brain," anyone?] and roll around in slammed Civics got here, it's how people with a more than a modicum of intelligence delude themselves into thinking that what they're doing is completely without fault.

For example, I recently picked up Ryan McGinness' flatnessisgod book. McGinniss is a designer whose work I enjoy; he's done quite a bit of stuff for *POPsmear* which is always an entertaining read — not to mention that Liz in their promotions department kindly consented to be my girlfriend for a day once — well, at least until I kissed her friend Amy. But that's another story. One involving pictures of Jeff Dahl shot in the head, Gwar's Slymenstra Hymen, Wayne Kramer's Buick, and way too much He'brew and Tequiza (though that combination sounds far more exciting on paper than it was in real life — but hey, what the fuck? Part of writing is the selective omission of events, right?). [Note to Anheuser-Busch: Tequiza does taste like it has a hint of tequila in it; but frankly, if I'm drinking tequila it's purely for the alcohol content and not for the taste. And right now the hangover that Tequiza leaves isn't nearly worth its lack of alcoholic punch. Back to the drinkin' 'n' drawing board, boyos.]

But I digress. The back cover blurb on *flatnessisgod* reads: "Ryan McGinness is an artist who has exhibited his work internationally and been responsible for numerous performance events

and pranks. His work makes strong social commentary on iconography, language, and historical and contemporary symbolism. His use of visual codes and signifiers subverts the very systems in which he operates. He has designed music packaging, posters, magazine spreads, and corporate

identities for some of today's major bands [Author's Note: whether the Bloodhound Gang actually qualifies as a "major band" is still up for discussion. Anybody? Anybody?], publications, and organizations."

Okay. While I've designed music packaging, posters, magazine spreads and corporate identities for some of today's *minor* bands, publications, and organizations, I don't have a book out. With the obvious inferiority of my collective material output exposed, allow me to snipe. There's a layout that McGinness did in the new issue of *Emigre* called "selfsameness". It's a clever piece; caricatures and portraits of McGinness done by various artists; photos of McGinness laid out like they're a page torn from a stock photo catalogue; a spread of logos created by various designers for McGinness, and finally a page which looks like it's scanned out of a journal. It reads somewhat like the lyric

sheet for the new Screeching Weasel record, though sorely lacking Ben's trademark venom and wit.

In the book, logos for various corporate entities (including one for an internal chunk of Time Warner) are exhibited along-side record covers for L.E.S. Stitches and spreads from *Dossier*. On one hand, it can be argued that the nature of the good designer is such that he can move freely between projects for punk rock bands and multimedia conglomerates. And I'm sure McGinness loves the contradictions therein; after all, he does have "dada" tattooed on his upper arm. It's the same old debate that gets thrown around again and again in both design *and* punk circles. When have you sold out? If I hold to a completely narrow, strict, Punk Rock™ definition, I'm just as much of a



"sellout" as McGinniss...I make money from my work and I've done work for fairly large corporations. David Carson, former art director for *Transworld Skateboarding* — and designer of 1998's Microsoft ads — once posited that since magazines are basically vehicles for advertising products; he's merely shifted the focus of what he's doing by creating pure advertising. A fair rebuttal, but all I know is that I feel way better holding a new issue of *Hit List* in my hands than a copy of an annual report for a bank that I helped create.

So I'm not going to accuse McGinniss of being a "sellout."

What I am going to accuse him of — and this (finally) gets back to my thesis — is irresponsibility. At the same time, I wouldn't be as likely to level that accusation at somebody like Dexter Holland or Billie Joe Armstrong, who've been regaled with that particular epithet so many times that they probably answer to it by

now. Both have taken their major-label money and started labels to put out records by bands that they like. Now I may have issues with Dexter's Sony P&D deal; I may think he puts out four or five really terrible records for every good one, but at the end of the day, I respect what he does with Nitro. Same goes for Adeline, though I think their track record as far as quality of releases far surpasses Nitro's. Sometimes I'm tempted to call the Warped Tour and the bands that embark on it irresponsible. Other times I think that it's a great way for younger (or lesser known) bands to get some exposure on the backs of crowd faves like Blink-182 or Pennywise. Whatever the case, the amount of money they charge for a Budweiser is unconscionable, the security guards are assholes and I hate dealing with all the "bros'" conception of what punk rock is all about. And that's what it comes down to — people aren't challenged to think at a thing like the Warped Tour.

HIT SQUAD



We Have Seen the Enemy and He is Durst

Fat Mike can ask where all the stupid people came from - I know I get more than my fair dose of them whenever I go to see NOFX — but the bottom line is that they're out there; smart people are taking advantage of their herd mentality and gullibility. Have been for centuries. And eventually, it seems like if you want to get anywhere, you have to either join the ranks of the smart people in power or choke it down and subject yourself to the dumb ones on a daily basis. The secret of a guy like Limp Bizkit's Fred Durst is that he manages to do both...he can simultaneously do it all for the nookie and lounge back in his chair as V.P. at a major record label. I think he's pretty damn reprehensible kissing corporate America's ass, paying lip service to the masses of lunkheads, and worst of all - above all else - Limp Bizkit is a fucking terrible band.

The mentality of a lot of intelligent people is "We can shake up the system from the inside." I think that's probably McGinniss' take on things. I believe it's also become Vic Bondi's M.O.. It's the

Everybody in our class related

to you somehow; whether they

loved you or hated you or

thought, 'Man, that Dave guy is

weird,' they related to you on

some level or another. Or at

mentality of a lot of designers I know. And you know what? Most of them are unhappy. The year I worked in Corporate America, I wasn't happy, but I didn't have any illusions about going in there and shaking things up. Yeah, certainly I inserted weird little in-jokes in the design of the publications I worked on, but at the end of the day I was exhausted and unsatisfied. At the same time, working for a large company affords one's work a larger audience. I'm sure many more

people have heard of Britney Spears than Sleater-Kinney. Or for that matter the Foo Fighters vis a vis No Use For a Name, though both SK and NUFAN have been around longer than either the Foos or the Inflated Teenage One. But you know what happens when you try to subvert things from the inside? You simply become part of the identity of that larger thing. Most people don't think, "Oh wow...what a subversive logo that actually points fun at its corporate owner," they think, "Oh, United Conglomerated Carbohedron®

has a new logo. Damn...I really want a burrito."

You know who I respect, despite the fact that I think her music is horrendous? Jewel. Yes, that's right, Jewel. She gives 40% of her total income to charity. I may bitch about how bad her music is; how old the yodeling thing is or blah blah blah whatever, but 40 % of one's income? That's not a little publicity stunt, that's a fucking commitment. She may be irresponsibly inundating the airwaves with crap; she may be the highest paid poet in the history of the craft for no good reason (my idiotic roommate from freshman year of college actually proved to be a better poet than Jewel...no lie), but she's definitely doing something to help people who probably can't afford her priceinflated major-label records or her mind-numbingly shallow books of verse.

Never Mind What You're Selling — It's What They're Buying

And I know that a lot of you probably feel you're stuck in. You have a family, a dog, a drug habit or whatever to support, but if you use just a piece of your intelligence doing something you feel is worthwhile a few minutes out of your day, I guarantee you'll feel better. But you aren't the people I'm sniping at; I'm taking a shot at those who are taking without giving back; or those who delude themselves into thinking they're kicking the system over with a few subtle twists of a mouse and a fat corporate paycheck. I wanna open a Hot Topic franchise and tell everyone who walks in the door to turn around, leave and go make something original for themselves instead of, "Let me show you our delightful selection of Crass T-shirts — a bargain at eighteen dollars!"

There's a store owned by the same company that owns Urban Outfitters called Anthropologie. My girlfriend works in retail management and really enjoys visual display work. One of the things she wanted to do when we were in Seattle a month ago was visit the store

because she thought they always had amazing window displays. And they do have amazingly creative window displays. The merchandise itself, on the other hand, really depressed me. It was all stuff reproduced to look both antique and hip. Like, the best of antique kitsch (which they charge out the ass for, I might add) for affluent folks who want to look folksy, artsy and creative. A readymade solution for the young stockbroker who wants to outfit his apartment to go with his collection of Miles Davis CD's (which are conspicuously dusty

least they knew who you were. the carousel on his CD changer is actually stocked with Dave Mathews (for the ladies), Limp Bizkit (for when he wants to Rock Out), Phish (to remind him of those stony Sundays with his frat bros at U Dub), and Lenny Kravitz (Dude...his version of "American Woman" just reminds me of all that's great about this country)). You know, stuff to go with the funky retro couch he inherited from his late grandparents and the "I'm Rugged" Mercedes M-Class parked underneath his build-

Is This the City of the Dead?

ago, my friend Justin from high school called me up. He told me that he was planning a fifth reunion for the class of '94 and asked me if I wanted to MC it. "Do I get in free?" was the first question out of my mouth. He said yes. I figured since it was free, I was going to be in Sacramento anyway over Thanksgiving weekend and there were a few people I wanted to catch up with, I might as well do it. He said, "I'm glad you're gonna do it. I mean, everybody in our class related to you somehow; whether they loved you or hated you or thought, 'Man, that Dave guy is weird,' they related to you on some

What got me thinking about all this is that a couple of months

level or another. Or at least they knew who you were."

Flattering. Thanks, Justin.

So Justin and my friend Liz — who is largely the reason for my illustrious career in graphic design and caption-writing - put this whole thing together. All I had to do was show up, eat free food, chat with folks and say a few words to the crowd. No big deal. I arrived at the hall they'd rented a bit early to get the lay of the land and get a headstart on the beer. Some old friends showed up, including my childhood friend Pedar, whom I hadn't seen in years. I found out one guy I worked on a huge project with my freshman year is now working on a PhD/MD at Stanford. Saw that some people had changed; others hadn't at all. You know, the basic class reunion hoo-ha. A lot of people were doing really impressive things with their lives - I actually know more people from high school who are in grad school than I do from college - others were doing about what I expected them to, while others were doing things completely unexpected. For example, one of my old classmates is studying penguins in Antarctica!

A bunch of people decided to head up to this bar after the reunion was over. I decided to tag along, as I really didn't have anything better to do that night. Some people who hadn't gone to the reunion showed up, including the one guy I'd probably hated more than anyone else during my high school career. This baseball-playing big jock motherfucker was there, whom I'd heard from a reliable source had smacked around his girlfriend pretty hard during high school. He used to tell me to shut up all the time — not like nobody else ever did that; hell, even my closest friends are wont to do so on occasion — but there was something about the look in his eye that just pissed me off to no end. Can't say I didn't wish a plague of termites on his collection of Louisville Sluggers (not to mention his wooden skull) on numerous occasions.

He saw me and was like, "Dave?"

"Oh hey, howya doin'?"

"Pretty good, you?"

"Really good. What've you been up to?"

"Oh, I sell furniture. What about you?"

"I'm a graphic designer and writer. Kind of a Rock Journalism sorta gig."

"Oh wow, man...that's great."

Somehow, despite all the years I'd devoted to hating this shithead, I felt sorry for him. He'd traded in his bat and glove for a lifetime of Barcaloungers and settees. Suddenly that Bruce Springsteen chestnut "Glory Days" popped into my head, followed by "I'm Not a Loser" by the Descendents, which was a staple of my jock-hating teenage life. I don't know if it was the amount of beer he'd consumed that had mellowed him out or the realization that he was no longer King Shit; now he's just another Sacto schlub destined to live out his days working for someone else and never really knowing what he could have been.

But that's the thing — practically everyone who had gotten by on their looks or athletic ability in high school suddenly wasn't good-looking enough or athletic enough to make a career of it. Sure, a few of those folks went to college and now have low-level accounting jobs at their parents' offices — a few others were actually talented and smart enough to actually get to work and push for something they loved; or in the case of the star quarterback, do well enough in college that he's now in law school. They were generally the elements of the Popular Crowd that I got along with the best anyway. And I'm sure most of you reading this magazine either aren't or weren't popular in high school. You were either too busy getting good grades or getting stoned or getting your ass kicked (or some combination thereof). Sacramento's the kind of town where the ones who end up shining are the ones who get out. Show me a person

DAVEJOHNSON

who's spent his or her entire existence in Sacto, and 95% guaranteed I'll show you one very frustrated, bored, small-minded person.

Yellin' in My Ear

And those are the very people, despite whatever potential for critical thought they may possess, who go Punk Out for a day at the Warped Tour and talk about how great it was for the other 364 days. Those are the people who buy Kid Rock records; those are the kind of people who, blindsided day after day by useless information, flashing messages and shiny objects, are conditioned to respond — their desire to look beyond their lot in life has been crushed. And ultimately, those are the kind of people that graphic designers, writers, musicians and the rest of the media are leading. And many of our best and brightest aren't concerned with encouraging them to think; rather, they're encouraging them to consume without digestion. There's a bumper sticker I see all the time in Berkeley — "If the people lead, the leaders will follow." But who's leading the people? Where are the Mario Savios of today? I'll tell you where they are - they're selling you the latest Extreme Value Meal from Taco Bell; they're working for the Chiat/Day agency, they're working for Razorfish, they're working for Macromedia; they're living in the expensive lofts that are in danger of choking the nightlife out of the South of Market area of San Francisco. The system's finally figured out a way to placate them. They're the people who're paid handsomely to bombard the masses with so many stimuli that the mere acts of choosing Coke over Pepsi - or the Backstreet Boys over 'N Sync — actually pass for critical thinking.

Larry Livermore writes this issue:

"Not only did your ancestors bequeath to you the technology—the trains and planes and automobiles, the radio and video and internet-that give you power unimagined by even the richest and most elite a century ago, they also gave you the ideas, the dreams, and the passions that drive you on, that tell you we can always be a better and a brighter and a more just and caring people."

And I think Larry's right about that; the problem I have is that these days, the only time you're gonna hear that outside of a bullshit political speech is in a Macintosh commercial. It's gone beyond something people think critically about and become just another Public Service Announcement (occasionally with guitars).

In the *Emigre* piece, McGinniss scribbles out a series of personal affirmations including,

"I have specific strategies for addressing the cause of any change & changing it with the least amount of effort. I am shaping my personal destiny. I have decided who I am. If I truly decide to, I can do anything. I can be anybody. I have the birthright of unlimited power, radiant vitality, & joyous passions that are mine."

He also prattles on about "achieving results", "determining his own destiny" and that he can "meet any challenge that comes his way". Sounds more like a Tony Robbins seminar than a piece from a graphic design magazine, doesn't it? Tony Robbins always frightened me... But there is one thing that McGinniss nails in there — he writes, "Quality questions create a quality life." Exactly. And ultimately, this is what I'd encourage the masses to do — it's what I encourage all my friends to do, and I try to do it myself; it's not an easy thing, but asking hard and meaningful questions of ourselves — and by extension, exposing ourselves to ideas that force us to question our self-concept — seem to be the only way we're going to begin to make this place better for everyone.

Oh, and by the way, why isn't Pegboy more popular?

harbin*

words + pictures + emo question by D A V E J O H N S O N

He invites the storm
He lives by instinct
With fears that are not fears, but
prickles of ecstasy

 William Carlos Williams (from the intro to "ff=66" by Jawbox)

don't remember what the first project that J. Robbins was involved in that I heard. I'm sure it was some Jawbox record or other. During my college years, I was Jawbox-obsessive; definitely one of my favorite bands, though I always managed to miss seeing them live. Although Jawbox evolved over the years, the one thing that remained constant for me as far as their records went was that all of them involved a heavy investment of time to fully appreciate. I mean, sure, initially, "Savory" comes across as an interesting, both tense and spacy dichotomy of a pop song. But underneath its nuts and bolts, there's a lot of crazy subconscious shifting going on. While *Grippe* was a fairly straightforward (though incredibly engaging) post-harDCore

AND THE UNCTIOUS "EMO QUESTION"

moffett*

robbins*

*the rock group popularly known as "burning airlines"

record (which isn't that much of a surprise. considering J. did time in Government Issue), Novelty, their second-full length on Dichord really began to tweak the same boundaries as contemporary locals Fugazi, although in a generally more pop-savvy direction. With their signing to the Atlantic roster in the post-Nirvana frenzy, they released a record that finally combined the best elements of their previous records, while pushing the expansive, experimental edge even farther out - For Your Own Special Sweetheart. Around the same time, another punk band from the opposite side of the country - also signed in the search for the Next Nirvana - released a little record called Dookie, which as well all know, saved or killed punk rock; sold it out or was a brilliant move to bring Berkeley to Iowa - the debate rages on to this day. The fact of the matter is, their brand of bittersweet sugarpunk appealed much more to the folks at MTV than Jawbox's brand of angular arty popcore. Green Day ended up in the Buzz Bin; I saw a Jawbox video on Beavis and Butt-Head

In 1996, the 'Box released their eponymously-titled fourth record, went on tour, got dropped by Atlantic, and in the spring of 1997, called it quits. In less than the space of a year, the world lost two of the three great Jaws of Punk, as friends and occasional tourmates
Jawbreaker packed it in during the summer of '96 - I'm not sure what Jah Wobble's up to as of late, but I'm pretty sure he's not dead (though he may

have

gone back to bein just plain John Wardle). Jawbox drummer Zach Barocas went off to New York for film school and currently plays in the Up On In, while bassist Kim Coletta is in grad school studying library science and continuing to run DeSoto Records. The band's Glimmer Twins, \$3Bill Barbot and J. Robbins, formed Burning Airlines with former Wool drummer Pete Moffett not long after the demise of the mighty Box. Bill has since amicably departed the group to spend more time with his business, his pets, and his wife (Coletta); the bass duties are now ably filled by Mike Harbin.

At first listen, Burning Airlines doesn't sound all that different from Jawbox; the difference is in songcraft - while some Jawbox songs sounded almost like excercises, Mission: Control! is filled with concrete songs. On record, it comes across, slinky, sexy, meaty and intricate. Live, I just stood shell-shocked at the raw musicianship and the effortless execution. Yeah, there are shamelessly guilty pop pleasures, for example the repeated "WhoooOOooo..." falsetto intro to "The Escape Engine", and the bouncy spunk of "Wheaton Calling", but there's some serious artifice behind that pop, and obviously a shitload of work that goes into crafting something so complex yet so whole-sounding that half the time the listener doesn't realize just how convoluted and layered it is. Sitting down with J. after years of listening to his music was a pleasure for me - he's an engaging, quick, incredibly intelligent guy and his enthusiasm for music is palpable. In addition to his impressive personal discography, J. has, as of late, amassed a sizable production resumé, including Jets to Brazil and the Promise Ring [Odd conspiratorial sidenote: Robbins was in Jawbox. Blake Schwarzenbach was in Jawbreaker. Robbins is now in Burning Airlines. Beyond the aeronautical/mandibular theme, both Mission:

Control! and Orange

orange cov-

Rhyming Dictionary have

ers. Jawbreaker's former drummer is named Adam. Jawbox' original skin-pounder was also named Adam. I'm sorry...this is just too odd for coincidence. We now return you to your regularly scheduled programming.] In fact, because of his background as both a musician and a producer, (and his gregarious nature and natural willingness to share his ideas) Robbins has seemingly become the spokesperson for the mainstream media's embrace of "emocore". Ever notice that in punk circles it's simply referred to as "emo", while in magazines like Spin they use the whole word? Oh well...even my friend who writes for Spin lamented the article they ran on their conception of emo. I don't think I really have to tell the readers of this magazine what an idiotic blanket this whole emo label is; the bands that are being referred to as "emo" today seemingly have little or nothing to do with the groups that inspired the term originally - which was kind of a joke in the first place, wasn't it? Oh well, "Punk Rock" was invented by the media as well (with some help from Legs McNeil), so what'cha gonna do?

J. and I talked before Burning Airlines' set opening for the Promise Ring at Bottom of the Hill; toward the end of the interview, Jason Gnewikow of the Ring joined in (PR were also predominantly featured in the *Spin* article).

Dave: The first mention of Burning Airlines in our magazine was Vic Bondi talking about you guys in his column.

J.: Yeah. I saw Vic in Seattle three or four days ago - which was really cool because I hadn't seen him for maybe four or five years, since he moved out here to work for Microsoft. So that was totally amazing, just to see him and kind of catch up a little bit, and then he was really complimentary to measure ut our band, which was really nice too, since Vic's always been like a hero of mine. He said "You should just read what I wrote." Then I saw it in Chico yesterday on this newsstand. He said we had "manly thunder" or something.

Dave: What was it? The God-Almighty Manly Thunder. I actually wrote that down, because that's what I think is interesting about both Burning Airlines and Jawbox is that most of the fans that I know of both bands are all geeky guys like me. Although my girlfriend is an exception - she's a huge fan of Burning

Marshall

Airlines and said "You know? This is really sexy music!"

J.: [smiling] All right! Vic said that Jawbox was sexy too. That's why I like Vic.

Dave: Yeah, I thought Jawbox was totally sexy - especially the For Your Own Special Sweetheart album, which I think is one of the sexiest records ever made - in a weird, angular sort of way.

J.: That's a pretty strange claim to make about that record. I mean, it's nice to hear - but it's like I told Vic; Vic was telling me that. But the whole subtext of that record is like, "Beware of Sex." That's totally what that record's about: "So, you like sex, do ya? Get ready to open Pandora's Box." So that's really funny. I know that was a real project for Zach [Barocas, Jawbox drummer], though; as a drummer - I know this is going to sound really pretentious in print - but he really made an

don't want to be too pat, but it's nice to hear, because I hope that it's true. Things that compel me always mix opposites in some fashion - whether it's some beautiful Stephen Sondheim song that's incredibly lush but it's actually about murder. Or like Nick Cave, a similar thing, or like Rites of Spring - the songs are so violent but they're really just about passion. So it's very good for me to hear that about stuff that I've been involved in. Gang of Four - a good example, an incredibly astringent sounding band whose songs are mostly about sex and love and politics.

Dave: Jawbreaker, I felt was another. I mean, Blake is like the Master.

Yeah. There's a band that sounded like a freight train no matter how restrained they tried to be, and yet, lyrically they were incredibly subtle and true.

Dave: I mean yeah, my two favorite bands

Suburbs, like "Come back and be mediocre with us and sink into oblivion," y'know?

Dave: An example of me and my idiotic sense of humor: I was listening to the record on the way over and trying to sing "London Calling" over the riff, but it doesn't really work.

J.: No, it doesn't; it's really just a feel. It's actually a feel that I guess a lot of people are using now, but at the time - the main verse part of that song [the part that resembles "London Calling"], I wrote when Jawbox was still together. And I remember showing it to Jawbox and it was so rhythmically anti- anything Zach would've wanted to play to that I just knew that it wasn't in the running. At the time, it didn't seem like a lot of bands were mining that bouncy feel, and I was like, "That's a perfectly great feel to write a song in, why didn't we ever do that before? So we should just do it." But Jawbox didn't, so when

"I wish that I could write a nice song for the sake of crafting a nice song, but it's always gotta be like something fucked up that I want to get off my chest."

effort to be a sensualist; he really wanted to play behind the beat and be fluid. He was biting beats off of Peter Gabriel records and stuff.

Dave: I think Jawbox - the last two Jawbox records especially - and Burning Airlines by extension, always had kind of a masculine/feminine duality. I guess I was just curious - was that an intent? Because it can be very aggressive music, but at the same time it can be almost lush.

J.: It's a project for me, because that's a characteristic of most of the music that I really love, although aggression isn't always necessarily a part of the mix. For me, trying to embrace both ends of dualities is something that I love, and it's something that I seek to do. I mean, it's a compelling project and it also might be in my personality. I tend to see opposite sides of arguments and find that the solution to them is somewhere in the middle. I'm being trite assessing these things; you

are Jawbreaker and the Clash.

J.: The Clash always sounded so weird when they tried to mellow out.

Dave: Speaking of the Clash, just as a side note, was the "Wheaton Calling" thing intentional?

J.: Oh yeah, absolutely. It was a working title that we just decided to retain just because...well I don't know what this seems like to anybody else, but for me, I thought in Jawbox, we tended to censor our sense of humor. Whether we were actually funny or not is a different question, but we would make a lot of jokes, but when it actually came time to present our band to people we tried to be serious. Looking back on it, it seems like a little bit of a waste of energy to me. We started calling it "Wheaton Calling" because of its obvious resemblance to "London Calling"; Wheaton is the town that I grew up in and the song is about the Call of the

Pete and I started jamming I pulled it back out and it actually went somewhere.

Dave: Did you write most of the lyrics on this record?

J.: Except for the song that Bill sings ["Meccano"], I wrote the lyrics.

Dave: Didn't Zach write a lot of the lyrics in Jawbox?

J.: A lot of times in Jawbox we'd do collaborative writing. Our versions of collaborations were like...a lot of the lyrics that Zach wrote usually were discards from his poetry, because he was always very serious about writing poetry. And his feeling about a rock 'n' roll song - rightly so - was that you could sing anything. Well, except that I don't really feel that way, but I sort of celebrate the idea that it's true. I totally think that's awesome. A lot of the stuf that he would come up with were just discards, or stuff that he thought sound-

ed funny or pleasing to the ear; and he would maybe have half a song; I would go through it and maybe find something that I could latch onto and attach my personal angst to and then flesh out. Because for me, lyric writing was - and unfortunately continues to be - a matter of a little personal exorcism. Which I don't think is necessarily the coolest way to write lyrics, it's just that when I go to write lyrics, it's the way it has to be in order for me to feel credible singing it. I wish that I could write a nice song for the sake of crafting a nice song, but it's always gotta be like something fucked up that I want to get off my chest. That's always gotta be in the picture somehow.

Dave: It's punk man.

J.: Yeah...I don't know. It's like I have to have some therapy in it, but like I said, some of my favorite songs are just beautifully crafted songs. But with Zach's lyrics, he would write maybe half a song. Unless it was something like "Whitney Walks" [from For Your Own Special Sweetheart] which had three lines that he just wrote. And then there were some

J.: We loved touring with Engine 88. They're great guys. I really love that band. It's fucked up to me actually that I don't hear about any of those guys continuing on. As great of players and as imaginitive as they are, I'm sad that I haven't heard any more music from them. But also, because I'm an Old Guy now, I really appreciate the idea of a band that knows when it's done. That's what I really loved about Jawbox breaking up, is that we knew that we weren't going to get better if we stayed together. That was really important to us; that we continue to top ourselves and continue to learn and grow. I think that we knew that we weren't gonna necessarily continue to challenge each other in ways that we wanted to be challenged. In a way, it took us too long because we didn't write any new songs. We wrote one new song in the eight months after the last record.

Dave: Was that "Apollo Amateur?"

J.: Yeah.

Dave: That song rocked my ass off! When I heard it on My Scrapbook of Fatal Accidents I

J.: I think the label problem just made us tired. Dealing with Atlantic and figuring out whether anybody gave a shit that we had a band. That just exhausted us. But I don't think that that poisoned the creative process for us, I think it was more just a matter of us being tired so by the time we went to go play we didn't have the patience to tiptoe around each others' egoes. Not everyone had contentious personalities, but everyone was sort of hoping to steer things...you know? I don't even know. When I look back on it, it's one of the best things about having a band: that however many of these different personalities, when they can actually put their ideas together and there is synergy, it's an amazing thing. It doesn't happen the way that it happened for Jawbox - I don't know whether Jawbox was a good band or not, but I know I loved being in that band and I feel like the way that our creative process worked was a very special experience; I feel the way that we collaborated was different from most bands' collaborations. In over half the bands I've met, there is a songwriter and there's a structure that the other members can feed into. In Jawbox, it was just like a free-for-all. It was

"Because I'm an Old Guy now, I really appreciate the idea of a band that knows when it's done."

songs that Kim and Bill and I wrote, which was really fun, which we wrote kind of Tin Pan Alley style. Like "Empire of One" [from Jawbox], where I had this character in mind and I was like, "Here's what this guy is like, here's some lines I have," and we just sat in a circle and bounced lines off each other and it was really fun.

Dave: A big part of that is having people you can do that with. I mean, Kim and Bill aren't exactly dummies.

J.: Right, they're brilliant - and Zach too. That was a band that could really recommend books to each other. It was really cool, so it was nice we were able to do that.

Dave: I remember Eric Knight [former Engine 88 bassist] was talking about the first time he met you guys and you were like, "Let's go to the bookstore!" and he was like, "Yes! This is the kind of band I wanna be on on tour with!"

was like, "Why didn't that ever get released?"

J.: We were really proud of that song. We wrote it right after we did the last record. I can't remember if we ever played it, even. It's a shame, because - now I'm going to contradict what I just said - because I could imagine the things that Zach brought to that band and the way that he pushed us to think about putting songs together could have led us in directions that we really could have grown from. But I also think that it was frustating for everybody and we were really tired and disillusioned and we hadn't really enjoyed the process of putting music together. That's why we never practiced except to do shows, even though we all lived in like a three-block radius of each other. We didn't really enjoy putting our ideas on the table in front of each other, because the contentious aspect of it took the synergy.

Dave: What fed into that contentious aspect? Was it the label difficulties?

very weird the times that I was a songwriter in that band and said "Here's my song, let's flesh it out,"; it was a real fight to get it the way that I wanted it initially. And most of the time it didn't really turn out the way that I pictured it, but it was always better.

Dave: How does Burning Airlines work songwriting-wise?

J.: It's not actually all that different, I think it's just that tempermentally we're all just interested in getting the job done; of finishing a song. If any of us comes to practice and says "I have a song, here's how it goes." We're prepared to learn it and then flesh it out in different ways. But it's very cool, because the best stuff that we've been writing has all been coming out of jams. We have a song that we don't have lyrics for yet that's kind of like an R&B slow jam. The whole idea was to take kind a choppy kick-snare-hat beat from TLC or something and build around that and make a song off of it. Sort of like a problem-solving approach. Now that it's done I listen to it and

it sounds more like Failure than Jay-Z. It's still pretty much of a free-for-all, but it's a different kind because there's only three of us, which is a very different format. It's much more open; and the personalities are different. When the three of us go to write there's a little bit more of a consensus on what might constitute a song as opposed to when Jawbox would write, everbody was very focused on their individual parts and everybody's definitions of what a song might be could be radically different.

Dave: So how is it different having Mike in the band instead of Bill now in terms of writing?

J.: It's a lot different, but it's just different. I wouldn't know how to quantify that exactly.

Dave: Is Bill going to work with you guys at all anymore?

J.: He's got an open invitation to do whatever he wants whenever he wants, but he's been really busy. He's started a multimedia company.

Dave: Oh, he's started his own company?

J.: Which is part of a larger life plan, which includes not going on tour anymore. I imagine that he'll probably be involved more when we go to record again. You know what Martin Swope did in Mission of Burma?

Dave: No.

J.: He was the sound guy/tape manipulator. Burma was basically this three-piece and then they had Martin Swope who was their live sound guy and he also did tapes and samples - well, sort of the 1980 version of samples - which you can can hear on their live video.

Dave: I've never seen it. I'm only twenty-three.

J.: There are all these sort of backwards tape-loop things that come in and out. So he was kind of this shadow member of Mission of Burma who actually contributed a lot to their sound, even though he wasn't a song-

writer. That's what I hope Bill will do. Not specifically that, but I really hope Bill will be involved somehow. But the three of us are really psyched to just play and write. I think we have a similar kind of compulsion to make music, go and play and go on tour. So we'll carry on regardless of whether Bill wants to be involved or not, but it's certainly not a case of him being kicked out or quitting. It's an interesting to me that more people don't have these loosely defined bands. This might sound fucked up, but it's an interesting thing about being older - ten years ago, I think there were bands that if somebody left, it just wouldn't be that band anymore, and "How can they carry on?" or "How could he quit that band?" but now I'm more interested in making music and learning things. It's a fantastic thing to sort of feel a sense of possibili-

Dave: Certain bands to me, though...if anybody would've left Jawbreaker instead of them breaking up, to me that unit...

J.: ...But it's also really clear that that was their project. That's what that band was. Just as, I hope, it's in the nature of Burning Airlines to be up for anything. I mean, the truth of it is, at the end of the day, we're a rock trio and it's basically me and Mike and Pete. But some of my favorite aspects of this band, and some of my favorite experiences with this band have been when we decide that we can do anything. Like, we did a recording, which is actually on our

record as

a hid-

track.

den

Dave: The "1999" song or whatever?

J.: Yeah. That was me and Pete and Bill. Pete works at this equipment rental place, and I thought it would be kind of fun, like a game where we go to Drums Unlimited, the equipment rental place and we grab whatever we can that fits into my car, we take it down to the studio where I work, spend a day at the studio, and the only rule is that we have to come up with songs with whatever we brought with us. So we grabbed bongos and a clavinet and some weird percussion stuff. It wasn't really all that strange, but it was just like "We can't be going to do a recording of songs that we know with equipment that we're used to. We have to just take whatever looks cool, run down to the studio, extemporize and hopefully we'll have some songs." That's the only song we came up with, but it was really fun, 'cuz it was like anything goes.

Dave: Yeah, I mean, listening to that, it's probably good it's a hidden track, but it's a really interesting thing to listen to. Some of the stuff in there I didn't know what it was...but now that you say there's a clavinet...

J.: ...Actually we didn't end up using the clavinet.

Dave: Well what *is* that weird melody in there, then?

J.: It's just super-super distorted guitar.

Dave: It's just...it's just weird...it doesn't sound like anything. One thing I wanted to ask you about, since you were talking about songcraft, was the Stereo record you were involved in.

J.: Oh, you heard that? That's a cool record.

Dave: It is a cool record, and it's basically just the two guys. And they played everything, didn't they?

J.: Yeah, it's Jamie and Rory. Although they have a drummer now.

Dave: I was knocked over by it, in terms of it having just rad huge-sounding pop songs.

J.: I wish I could've been involved with that record from the start, but I only got to mix it. And we mixed in two days.

Dave: Wow.

J.: I really hope I get to work with them again; they're very cool. Jamie is very...I wouldn't even know what to say; driven or thoughtful;

he's fully inside the process of songwriting, which is something I totally love about recording people. I get to get this full blast of people's commitment to the idea of writing songs. It's so fucking fun. It's so inspirational to be able to see the way the Promise Ring guys put songs together; what drives them; their approach to craft. Plus just being close enough to somebody to really get the full dose of their enthusiasm about writing music is so fucking cool. I really love it. The other great thing about the Stereo is that Jamie just called me out of the blue; I never knew that guy before and he just called me up - I was like, "Oh, okay," and it turned out to be this great record.

Dave: Yeah, I thought it was a really, really cool record. Are you going to be doing the next Jets to Brazil record?

J .: I believe so.

Dave: I'm *really* anxious to hear that. That song, "Got No Crew" - I saw them play it live a couple times...

J.: ...Oh, they recorded that already.

Dave: What's it on? Is it going to be on any-

thing?

J.: I don't know what they're going to do. Maybe they'll put it on the next one but we recorded along with a couple other songs that ended up being outtakes from *Orange Rhyming Dictionary*.

[At this point I start rambling on about how much I love Jawbreaker.]

Dave: It's almost like Jawbreaker is more popular now than they were when they were together.

J.: That's true of a lot of bands. It's apparently true for Jawbox. The people that I talk to that have come to see us - it's ridiculous how many never saw Jawbox, but it's *very* true for Jawbreaker. Jawbreaker's like a phenomenon. That band, I think, said a lot of things that epitomized what a lot of people were thinking.

Dave: Yeah, they were totally the soundtrack to my college life. Though For Your Own Special Sweetheart was in there, too. Two years after the fact is when that record really hit me. I mean, I'd heard it, but at some point it hit me that this is a fucking amazing



record! The last half of my junior year that record was totally the soundtrack to my life - which is right around the time you guys broke up. I listened to it incessantly. The thing about Jawbreaker is that so many people are like, "This is my life on a record." Blake just taps into something - and I think Jets to Brazil does that as well.

J.: They're also musically not willfully obscure, which is nice. They're not afraid to be direct, which is a virture.

Dave: Though my friend Brett and I get in arguments all the time about *Revenge*Therapy versus the other records.

J.: My two favorite Jawbreaker records are Dear You and 24 Hour Revenge Therapy.

Dave: Mine too.

J.: But I don't see them as all that radically different from each other.

Dave: I think the one that sticks out to me - it doesn't stick out like a sore thumb, but it sticks out - is *Unfun*. If you listen to them all the way through you can definitely see the progression, but I think *Unfun* is the one that sounds the least like the others.

J.: But it's also a great record.

Dave: So who are you gonna be working with? Got anything lined up?

J.: Well, I'm supposed to be recording Bluetip in December although Dave Stern left the band recently - he was the non-singing guitar player. I don't know how the "No-Dave" factor is going to influence that. I'm talking to the Jets; I'm also supposed to record a band from DC who are amazing - they're called Q and Not U, and they're really, really, amazing.

Dave: What are they like?

J.: They remind me a little of Mission of Burma - you can tell for me that I really dig them 'cuz I mention them every couple minutes - they remind me a little bit of Fugazi. They have this really great rhythm section. It's really spidery and skeletal; good vocal melodies. They also have this great inclusive element; like a way of doing a show that doesn't make it feel rote. It feels very inclusive. They're just a great band. I've only seen them one time and was totally floored. So with any luck, I'll get to record them as well.

At this point, three fourths of the Promise Ring have entered the dressing room. I couldn't help myself. I had to do it. The interview now proceeds to plunge straight to hell.

Dave: Since the Promise Ring are here, can I ask you the Big Emo Question?

J.: What's the Big Emo Question?

Dave: How does it feel to be the Big Emo Posterboys featured in *Spin*?

J.: I dunno. How do you think it feels?

Dave: I don't know. It's just so silly even for me to talk about, but it's just this thing that's



J.: I love that anybody's discussion of emoany time you talk to anyone about emo who's "writing about emo" - is always about etymology and it's always about how you shouldn't be talking about it anyway. I mean seriously, I talked to that fucking *Spin* guy for an hourand-a-half about these great bands who aspiring to excellence, and that's what he should write about - put the "emo" thing in its grave and just talk about how everybody wants to do great work.

Dave: Yeah, I mean, what does a band like Six Going on Seven have to do with like,

Rites of Spring?

Jason: We already know the answer to that; it's so redundant.

J.: The sooner we stop talking about emo and get it back to that lovely joking status that it used to have, the better.

Dave: But it just seemed so *timely* because of the *Spin* thing. That's really the only reason I brought it up.

J.: We could get into the whole question of, "Why is it timely because it's in *Spin*?" Who gave *Spin* the power to make it timely?

Dave: I'm not saying it's timely *because* it's in *Spin*, I'm saying it's timely because that issue of *Spin* just came out.

J.: I *still* ask you - just to be contrary - who gave *Spin* the power to make it timely...

Dave: ...I'm not saying that *Spin* has the power to make it timely...I just...

J.: I know, I'm just putting you through the wringer...

Dave: I know, I deserve it. But I'm just saying that it was there and a lot of people probably read it and now they're going to go out and buy Promise Ring records. They'll have their little Promise Ring sticker on their car and their Limp Bizkit t-shirt on.

Jason: About two months ago, I was just like, "I don't care...whatever." Now I'm just like...whenever I hear it - even the mention of it is just starting to make me really irritated...

J.: It's like the energy that it takes to not care is actually even too much.

Jason: Yeah. When we were playing in Minneapolis, this woman called. She was somewhere in California, so I'm sure we'll meet her. She must've thought I was the biggest asshole. She was like, "I'm writing a thing, and I know you're going to hate doing it, but it's about 'emo people.' It's like an emo trend piece." I was like, "I don't know what to tell you..." She asked me zero questions about our band. She asked, "So what do you think about 'emo'" and for like fifteen minutes I was going back and forth with her like, "I don't care!" Then she'd be like, "Well..." and I'd almost answer and then finally say, "No! I don't care. I'm sorry I'm being rude, but...I'm sorry, I'm just gonna hang up the phone. I just don't know what to say to you about this."

J.: It was weird talking to the *Spin* dude. And the *Guitar World* guy too - Jim DeRigotis; who's a smart guy and knows shitloads about music and is *serious*. I was like, "At last, a chance to talk about *music*. At last, a chance talk about how you shouldn't worry about what you're gonna call it and just check out all the good bands that I know." The *Spin* guy, it was the same thing. And what do I get? People write about anything; they just pick their perspective. They just choose whatever you say that will amplify their perspective.

Jason: Yeah, exactly.

J.: And that is a way more interesting topic than emo. Because that is about points of view.

Dave: One thing about the *Guitar World*piece: you pissed off
the guy at
Guitar
Center

because

you

were "selling out" this music. He was like, "J. Robbins shouldn't be talking to any of these people!" The guy at Guitar Center was flipping out over you talking to this magazine.

J.: I think I've learned my lesson; it's a weird edge to walk, because it's a channel to let people know about good things. It's the same thing as Jawbox signing to a major label. I was like, "Jesus, should we do this?" Bill was like, "Listen, I drive around all day delivering plumbing supplies, and I listen to the fucking radio and there's nothing but shit on the radio. If we get on the radio, then at least I know there's one good thing on the radio." It's the same thing. Yes, it's an avenue where people discuss a lot of crap, but if somebody's leafing through there and they find out about Braid or Promise Ring because they've been leafing through, then is that not a good thing? Presumably it's a good thing, y'know? But I definitely feel like - after wasting a lot of breath talking about things that were really important to me to people I expected would understand and try to convey some of what I was trying to say - now I know what a waste of energy it is. But still, it's even silly to talk about. It's not that different from when people used to talk to Kim about women in music and what a revolutionary thing it is. It's sad that it's still revolutionary in people's eyes, but the fact is that women have been making music for fucking ever and it's just weird; it's just social contexts that people crave. The creation

of

social contexts and controversy over totally meaningless issues so that they don't have to get on with anything actually worthwhile. I can't wait to see this...it's gonna be really horrible [nervous laughter all around].

Dave: Part of the reason I brought it up with the Promise Ring here is just to give you a chance to tell the other side of that *Spin*, too.

J.: Don't you think it's fine? Spin wrote an article...

Dave: Yeah. But I also know that whenever I wrote an letter to Spin, they would completely twist and convolute my words. I remember writing a letter to Spin - they did a whole article on MRR when Tim died. Mel Cheplowitz wrote a column one time; a total joke column about Gilman Street. J. Church and the Parasites were playing. Mel made this whole thing up. He just makes random shit up. There were all these people in the streets and they set up a scale. There were like 10,000 kids up and down Gilman street trying to get into the show. Obviously totally preposterous, but when the guy wrote the article, he put in a thing to the effect of "Gilman Street once set up a scale to weigh people to get in." So I wrote this whole letter basically about that; like "Hello? This was a totally facetious column and you guys printed it as fact." They never printed a correction on that and just printed the little piece of my letter that said something about Tim.

J.: With all due respect, most of the time people who write about music - I mean, it's wonderful that people want to do it; to celebrate music is a beautiful thing, and totally worthwhile, but I don't remember what I read in Spin last week, I just remember I was misquoted. Thanks very much, now I have a life to get on with, y'know? You can't get mad about it. I mean, it's like getting mad about MTV's The Real World. Also, not to say that Spin is full of crap, terrible writing, either. I

mean, I'm on tour, I'm driving across fucking Idaho. I could read *Spin* or I could look out the window at waving wheat, y'know? It sorta depends on how I wanna entertain myself.

Dave: It's like watching MTV.

J: Now that we're in the Pit...

Dave: Yes, now that we're in the Pit, let's see if I can find anything to redeem us at all here. Oh, here we go. Oh yes, this is my final question, and this should uplift us from the Pit.

J.: Are we getting out of the Pit?

Dave: Yes, we're getting out of the Pit now J. If you could produce or record anybody outside of indie/punk, who would it be?

J.: Anybody?

Dave: Anybody.

J.: I wouldn't even know who to say...

Dave.: Well, who do you like? Who do you think would be interesting to work with; where you'd come up with some interesting stuff?

J.: I think it would be amazing to work with Mark Eitzel. I think it would be totally amazing and educational. I think it would be amazing to record Randy Newman. That's who I think would be fucking incredible to record.

Dave: Why?

J.: Probably for similar reasons, actually. Well, Randy Newman is like a god in my eyes as a songwriter. I think I'd just be interested to work with anybody who's interested in songs, because that's what I'm interested in. Off the top of my head, those are just two really great songwriters; people who really care about words and they just care about songs. For me, I'd love to have a chance to work with somebody who had songs but didn't know how they were set them necessarily. Which probably isn't true of either of those people, but somebody with whom I could kind of collaborate and do arrangements; come up with a project where they already had words and changes and melodies but they didn't know if the song would be better expressed by a string

quartet or a rock band or like one guy

stomping on the floor. Some kind of project like that, that was really open ended, I would really love to do. There's a gazillion people that I think are really inspiring. It isn't so much that I think I could bring something to those projects, it's just that I'd love to know what it's like to record the Mekons. You know what band I'd really love to record is the Eternals, from Chicago, which is the people who used to be in Trenchmouth. In terms of fantasizing about who I'd like to record, the Eternals are probably like my big fantasy band. I saw them play the night before we left. They played with Isotope 217 and they just fucking totally floored me. I couldn't even believe it.

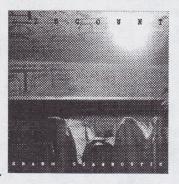
Jason: Is it like Trenchmouth or is it totally different?

J.: I guess it's similar to *Broadcasting System*, the last Trenchmouth record, but there's no guitar. Their songs are way more melodic in this way that's like, standards. Like a Duke Ellington kind of influence.

Dave: What's the instrumentation?

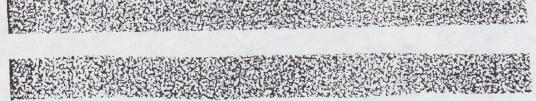
J.: Drums...the drums are really polyrhythmic. Like Fred in Trenchmouth would always keep the four going, this drummer plays around the beat a lot more. Wayne plays bass and he also plays keyboards, and then Damon sings plays keyboards and percussion. For being such a totally sparse band - they're really skeletal-sounding - it's just fucking incredible. Just an amazing band. They reminded me of Broadcasting System I suppose more than anything, but way more melodic. They're a fucking great band. They don't sound like anything that I've heard. Like all the elements they have in that band - it doesn't sound like a combination that I've ever heard before. Which is pretty amazing.

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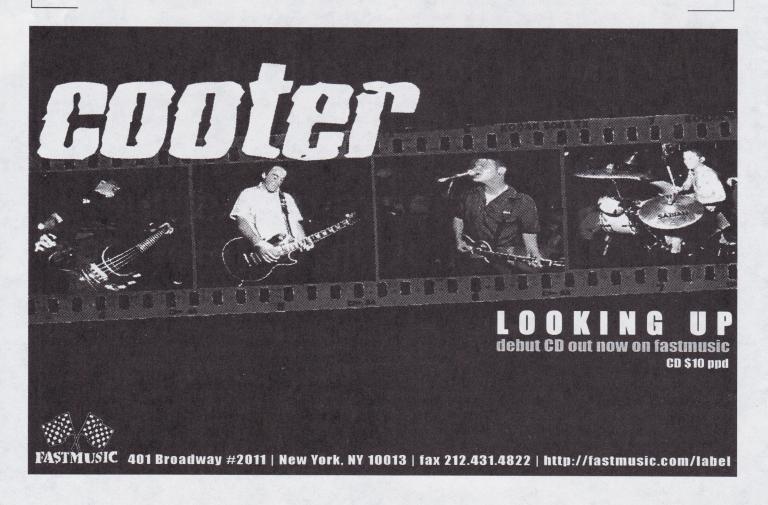




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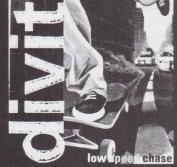
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HIT SQUAD



ic Bondi always begins his column by mentioning something about pushing 40. Well, I'm about to push past it, in February, and to be honest I don't really feel too badly about it. First off, I'm not the senior member of this staff and, second, it's just a number, right? Anyway, not only am I about to turn 40, but I'm still listening primarily to styles of music that most people my age have long abandoned or never cared for that much in the first place. A lot of them probably have teenage children who I see at shows. A lot of them would probably insist that I turn down the stereo if I lived in their house... come to think of

YOU GODDAMN KIDS! Al Quint it, my wife tells me to do that on occasion. I also wonder how much of the excess volume is to compensate for the hearing loss (undiagnosed, but I know it's there to some extent) I've suffered over the years. I suppose it's

inevitable, but I also didn't wear adequate protection in my younger years. Let that be a lesson, kids-always wear earplugs, because if you don't, you have to turn down the stereo when talking on the phone or have just about everything said to you repeated.

But I refuse to stop rocking out...as I hit that milestone, I'm getting the urge to play in a band for the first time in over a decade, and I continue to be blown away by brash, raw, uninhibited sounds and actively seek out music that encompasses those qualities. Sure, each trip to the mailbox brings in a good amount of mediocre, forgettable, generic CD's and vinyl, but all it takes is one record to grab my senses, shake me up and down, and kick me in the ass, and my faith is restored. It doesn't happen as much as it used to, but it can be done. I have the Unida CD (Man's Ruin) on right now-it's the old singer for Kyuss and, if one were to give a capsule analysis, it would say "70sderived metal" or stoner rock, the current term that's not really applicable to me, as I don't smoke weed. Sure, it's well-worn ground and there's a sense of deja-vu, but it's played with an enthusiasm, an affection for heavy rock that's hard to fake. It has soul. It's loud, boisterous and fresh-sounding, and if my wife wasn't upstairs right now suffering from the toothache from hell, I'd probably be playing it at a much louder volume. I may revel in deviant sounds, but I also try to be considerate and compassionate. And even though I'm a 'zine editor and get sent a lot of free stuff, I also continue to buy new music and don't take a passive stance. Many people in the same situation as me seem to take a more passive approach to writing, allowing publicists to dictate what interviews will be featured, only reviewing the freebies, and not attempting to discover shit on their own. I found out about Unida by word of mouth. Granted, I got an advance CD of it, but filed it away and didn't bother to dig it out (the fate of most advance CD's-those are one of the scourges of my existence-but

that's another matter) until my pal Tony Erba from 9 Shocks

Terror raved about it. A recommendation from Erba is one I pay attention to, since the man has generally unassailable musical taste, and he was right on the money here. His own band is one that's always on my tongue anytime anyone asks if I've "heard anything good lately."

I discovered the brilliance of 9 Shocks by a happy accident, come to think of it. A few years ago I went to see Japanese punk band the Gaia play, and 9 Shocks were touring with them. I'd never heard of this band, and didn't even realize it was Erba until a little while into their set (I hadn't seen him since he'd been the vocalist in Face Value). 30 seconds into their first song and I was standing there with my jaw drooping southward, mouthing "holy fuck" repeatedly and convulsed into fits of involuntary spasmatic ecstasy. I had the same reaction when seeing them again last spring. After the opening rumble from the bass and the jarring guitar joined in, something snapped as I flailed my less-than-svelte body across the floor of the loft where they were playing. This is not something I do that often these days. The first time seeing them was just a chance encounter, and it made me an instant convert. 9 Shocks Terror are unabashed in their influences, and their most certainly comes from the heart. They are ravenous record fiends, on a lifetime search for elusive vinyl booty, particularly from Japan and Europe, and that passion comes out through their music. As I said in the case of Unida, it's hard to fake when it hits that hard.

To get back to the point, if there is one, there's not all that much new under the musical sun, unless you're talking about the whole techno/digital/dance thing, which isn't anything I choose to acknowledge, or hip-hop, most of which is complete, utter shit. Come to think of it, I've never felt more of a disconnection from popular music than I do today, and am proud of the fact that I can look at the *Billboard* Top 100 songs and only know a handful of them. But the underground thrives, and there are a lot of punk, hardcore, garage and other provocative bands still making a worthwhile racket. This magazine is a testament to that opinion.

I just got through reading Flowers In The Dustbin, a book by former Newsweek rock writer James Miller which traces the history of rock 'n roll from approximately 1947 to 1977. I consider myself to be an afficionado of rock history and love to read the stories and anecdotes, especially in the context of the time and places when music was created. Flowers is hardly a comprehensive, all-inclusive tome on the form. As with any writer, Miller's sense of history is colored by his preferences and musical prejudices. That's fine-there isn't a single writer who isn't subliminally or overtly disinclined to such predispositions. But one thing that stuck out is the fact that Miller basically feels that there hasn't been any worthwhile rock and roll music, with few exceptions, since 1977, and he really thinks the decline began in the late 60s/early 70s, with Altamont and the Beatles' dissolution. Granted, he's a classic baby boomer and many people born between the end of WWII and the early 60s have that mindset...they just don't get this modern music. And to be honest, I don't disagree completely with that assessment, in that what is considered popular music has fragmented into an incredible myriad of subgenres, and most of it is utter shit-soulless hackwork created to satisfy a certain marketing niche and crassly marketed to a waiting, gullible public.

Still, to summarily dismiss the last 20 or so years is to suf-

fer from a certain form of blinkered myopia. I harbor no illusions that the music industry is anything but a load of shit or that most stuff does, indeed, suck. I'll probably always have a preference for the music of my own youth, which is a combination of 70's classic rock, metal and some pop, the late 70's punk era and early 80s hardcore. I've also developed a strong fondness for 60's garage rock, thanks to my former record store co-worker Peter Antonelli and his amazing mix tapes of obscure, vintage garage chestnuts. Contemporary bands that I enjoy have roots in those genres, but that's not exclusively the case. I refuse to listen to music from just one time period. There are still bands that come along and use those styles as a starting point, but then attempt to update them or take things in a different direction. It's still music that abrades, that revels in a distinct lack of accessibility in the conventional sense, and that is (at its best) created for the sake of art or musical expression or (insert your own lofty premise here) instead of commerce.

Of course, this is something of a utopian and slightly naïve perspective. But I think a lot of us know it when we hear it.

Miller retired from the rock critic game some years back. I can't say I blame him, in a way, because there's so much bullshit to deal with. And why fake enthusiasm if you don't genuinely feel it for the material you're covering? People ask all the time if I get tired of doing my 'zine or having to deal with the incoming glut of new material. In fact, when I spoke with Ira Robbins, the former editor of Trouser Press, in '93, he insisted that it would happen to me, as it had happened to him. Sure, there are times I

feel like that, but then I'll see a 9 Shocks Terror or get something brain-blowing and, at least for the moment, it all seems new again. So I'm not quite ready to abandon the rock 'n roll circus just yet.



I'm going to start including a smattering of reviews as part of this column, in order to cover some recent releases that I feel are worthy of your attention. Of course, the predisposition is towards loud/fast/aggressive material, so keep that in mind...people probably know that's my bias by now, anyway. If I were to draw up a "Best of '99" list at this moment, most of these records would be on the list.

F-MINUS

This is some smash-it-up, hyper-fast hardcore in short, succinct doses. A hint of early Agnostic Front and Poison Idea and a textbook example of how to keep it simple and effective. Ranting with a fatalistic but level-headed, intelligent rage. (Hellcat /2798 Sunset Blvd./LA, CA 90026)

RAT BASTARDS - "Perpetual Disorder"

Completely ripping and manic punk music played with pissedoff venom. The Bastards, from Chicago, are certainly influ-

ALQUINT

enced by early 80's hardcore, when the music was meant to be an expression of alienated rage, and they capture that feeling with a fired-up immediacy. (Beer City/PO Box 26035/Milwaukee, WI 53226)

KILL THE MAN WHO QUESTIONS - "Sugar Industry"

I've never felt more of a dis-

connection from popular

music than I do today, and

am proud of the fact that I

can look at the Billboard

Top 100 songs and only

know a handful of them.

A Philadelphia band with scathing male/female vocals. Veering easily from manic speed outbursts to heavier/damaged compositions, and uncompromising both musically and in its viewpoints. To the members of KTMWQ, punk is more than just some lip-service to a vague idea of "unity," more than some vacuous fashion statement, more than a way for testosterone-addled assholes to get out their macho aggressiveness. It's a way to challenge, provoke, and create a sense of community. If

that sounds sappy, tought shit, but those are the emotions that come out while listening to this album and remembering how cool it was seeing them in someone's basement, playing their fucking hearts out. Songs that grab you by the throat and refuse to let go. (Coalition/Hugo de Grootstraat 25/2518 EB Den Haag/HOLLAND)

BROKEN/REACT/BOILING MAN - "That Which Does Not Kill You..."

A 3-way split with three Connecticut ass-whuppin' bands. There's an overlap of members from one group to another and they all favor a loud, aggressive style, but each do it in their own man-

ner. Broken's six songs, including a cover of Jerry's Kids' "Uncontrollable," is some of their strongest material yet. Straight-ahead power and unvarnished lyrics. React hammer ahead in a thrashy vein, throwing in a nice tribal beat for "A Conscience Scarred," while "The Forgotten One" intersperses melody with the bile. Once again, a harsh male/female vocal tandem and a trebly assault. Boiling Man favor a heavier, doomier sound than previously, while Todd Rogers' vocals continue to cut through with nightmarish grit. Production is on the rough side, but the burn is inescapeable and the lyrics expose a strong amount of cynicism. Three bands who could very well kill. (Elevator Music/PO Box 1502/New Haven, CT 06511)

LORD HIGH FIXERS - "Is Your Club A Secret Weapon?"
Tim Kerr, who cut his teeth with the Big Boys and Poison 13

"back in the day," is in this band. An assimilation of coolness and revolutionary sounds on their latest album. Far beyond mere garage revivalists, although that's the root and still a strong forte for this band. The blues-drenched, fuzz-bust raunch is there and Mike Carroll, also a former Poison 13-er, has a rasp that cuts through the density with soulful arrogance. Their version of the Seeds' "Just Let Go" gets positively unhinged, and the fire is undiminished for "The On Going Saga Of The Side Show Bob Syndrome" and "Slow Boat To China."

HIT SQUAD

"Scatman Revolution" is a defining moment, though, an expansive sonic tapestry/loop that draws on Gil-Scott Herron's "The Revolution Will Not Be Televised," forcing together a number of motifs and themes. Free jazz saxophone, Allen Ginsberg's "Howl", and other sounds waft through the background, and the effect is gripping. There's also a hip-hop ambiance (in a good way) for "We Want, We Would Appreciate." "Miss Jean Louise" is a horn-laced jazz-rocker drawing more than a bit of influence from the MC5's "High Times" album. The MC5 were inspired by similar radical musical and ideological motifs and melted them into a singular high-powered rock vision, and the Fixers certainly have that "music of the people" idea in mind. They take a slightly different route than the Five, casting a wider net, and have created an edgy, potent statement. And it rocks. (Estrus/PO Box 2125/Bellingham, WA 98227)

ONE LAST WISH

There's a current strain of music going under the moniker of emo and it's become meaningless or, more accurately, a pale imitation of the what the style originally represented. The roots of the term, for better or worse, came from the crop of such mid-80's DC bands as Rites Of Spring, Embrace, Soulside, etc...The output from that region during that time-frame continues to amaze me...so many great bands in such a brief stretch, and several formed, performed, recorded, and broke up

in such a short space. One Last Wish existed for part of 1986 and comprised Guy, Brendan, and Eddie from Rites Of Spring (Eddie switched to bass for this band and handled a few of the vocals, as well), plus Michael Hampton from Embrace. Their demo is finally available on disc. This is melodic but gripping music more in line with Embrace, where Guy's restless, sanity-pushing vocals create a yin/yang with the subtle, but knock-out-hooky arrangements. A mesh of electric and occasional acoustic guitars, as likely to use shimmering, jangly lines as power-chords. (Dischord/3819 Beecher St. NW/Washington, DC 20007)

VIOLENT SOCIETY - "Separation Is Killing Us"

For the uninitiated, this Philadelphia punk band have been knocking around since the early 90s, releasing a string of throttling releases, and "Separation Is Killing Us," their latest album, continues their forceful tradition. Fast songs with Pat's nettled vocals and a super-tight instrumental lineup. "Preaching To The Converted," "Totally Fucked," "Indivisible," and the venomous "Rotting" and "Ask Me Again" all connect with aggressive authority, while "Breathe The Staleness" is in a slower-tempo, classic punk vein. The lyrics match the rage of the music, expressing contempt for propagandists of all stripes. as well as trusted individuals who engaged in acts of betrayal. But there's a tough-to-miss viewpoint regardless, speaking out against mindless patriotism and prejudices and over-zealous law enforcement personnel. The point is made without slogans or preachiness, as well. (Blackout/PO Box 1575/New York, NY 10009) 🕀





POLITICAL? YES POLITICALY CORRECT? NOT EXACTLY

New full length CD, "Rush Hour" in stores soon.

Featuring ex members of THE PIST and BALTIMORE FOOT STOMPERS.

FUQ2/COLDFRONT RECORDS

PERSONAL ECTIONS ON THE 1999 "SOCK NORTH AMERICA oey shithead keithley his past summer we got LAW, the ANTI-HEROS, SLOPPY SECONDS, the invited to participate in D.H. PELIGRO BAND, and the LOWER EAST "The Social Chaos/ SIDE STITICHES. In some towns local bands Anarchy in North also played. The whole tour was the brainhild America" Tour. During of Randy Wolpin from the Pooch Agency. Most July and August it travof the time it lived up to its billing of being elled around America for chaotic, and it really gave lots of people a three and a half weeks, chance to witness a rippin' old school festival. and then finished up with one big extravagan-I had a great time, and if you read on you'll za in Toronto, Canada. It was a great lineup of find out why. old school punk bands, although not all of 2,712 miles. That's the distance between the bands played every show. The tour feabesotten old Vancouver (in a New World tured T.S.O.L., the BUSINESS, D.R.I., the U.K. sense), and the even more besotten New SUBS, D.O.A., VICE SQUAD, CHELSEA, the Orleans. But that's where we'll have to drive VIBRATORS, ONE WAY SYSTEM, MURPHY'S to join the launching of the "Social

Chaos/Anarchy in North America 99" tour.

The distance there is even more of a gulf when you think of the will, the power, the strength, and yes, the drunken stupidity that was punk rock in the early 1980s, especially when compared to what it has been transformed into on the eve of the new millenium. A lot of old bands were trying to live up to their former glory, which is a very hard thing to do. Those times were powered by direct action, confrontation, tension, and the sheer joy of being obnoxiously fucking loud.

I suggested, for the health, snarkiness, and general well-being of this advanced yearsy bunch, that we have wheelchair ramps and paramedics on standby alert, whereas Jack Rabid (editor of *The Big Takeover*), recommended that we bring along a supply of Viagra in case any old groupies showed up.

Day 1: Monday, 12 July 1999

Heading out for "Anarchy in North America", we'd have to see about that. It was a still, blue-skyed morning, and didn't feel like no black day in July, (I would have thanked God, if I thought there was one). I got up at 7 AM and started working, faxing, sending e-mails, and doing last minute packing for the tour. I left the house at 10:30, only one and a half hours behind. Well, it isn't like going on tour when you're in your 20's. I told the kids to give me the strongest and longest-lasting hug they could, and they did. I picked up our bassist Kuba at 11:00. Then we went to try and get a cell phone, but the fuckers at BC Telephone wanted a \$250 deposit on a \$40 phone. I've only been paying my BC Tel bills for the last twenty years. Kick the carpetbaggers out (since they send the money back to New York anyway), and let the employees own it and run the company.

We picked up our drummer Jan at 1:00. We approach the Peace Arch, and cross to the U.S. It's always the biggest part of the trip going south. And the Arch, this giant structure, reads "Children of a common mother, may these gates never close." One time they got chained shut by our original manager Ken Lester and a bunch of other U.S. and Canadian Vietnam War protesters, who then ransacked the border town of Blaine, Washington, until vigilantes chased them back to Canada...but I digress. We hit the border at 1:30. There was a 30-minute line, and the guards seemed to be concentrating on searching old people. For some reason

they let us subversives through without any problems. After we got through we picked up our videographer Ziggy and our roadie Bone, who'd been waiting at the Denny's in Blaine for three hours. I grabbed some coffee at "Seattle's Best", but it was pure shit so I poured it out. We grab some merchandise from Birch Bay/ Hit Valli's place in Tacoma, which offers free supplies, courtesy of the U.S. Army.

Hey, cool, I found a journal there. I haven't written in one of these since the first D.O.A. tour back in 1979. It's a U.S. ARMY JOURNAL, too. That reminds me of my old friend Alex Brosgard, who upon re-entering the U.S. after having left it in disgust in the 1970s, was asked "Have you ever been a member of a subversive group?", When Alex replied "Yes", the guards jumped back, aghast. Alex then said, "Yeah, the U.S. Army." Alex had served in Vietnam as a Green Beret.

It's nightime now. Things are looking up. First the MC5, and then the DICKS, were playing on the stereo, a welcome change from the five punk copy bands' CDs that are often sent to Sudden Death Records. Uh, oh, it's time to piss in the empty "Seattle's Best" coffee cup, which would probably be an improvement. Maybe I should pull a "Wimpy" (ex-SUBHU-MANS and D.O.A.) and just let somebody else pick it up and drink it. YOU KNOW, you just leave a container of piss where it should't be, 'cause you never know who might end up drinking it. It's still nightime, and we're on the I-84 Portland to The Dalles.

The DICKS' "We Don't Want No Fuckin' War" just finished playing. Wow! Everything and everybody is quiet. It's funny, these guys I'm travelling with are all asleep, and yet they're all younger than me.

[CAPTAINS LOG: 11:05 PM at a truck stop. You don't want to see or smell it/entry by Jan]
It's a beautiful night on the Columbian Gorge.
Got gas at Cascades Lodge, we are the last customers. Another nice little town, nice folks, a little on the white trash side. That's America these days. Poor people, displaced, living in trailers. Some are nice folks, though. Just before we leave I stand outside and feel the beautiful breeze through the gorge...what a night.

[CAPTAINS LOG: Tuesday, 13 July, 5:30 AM. Dropped my first big log of the tour in Ontario, Oregon-how appropriate!/Entry by Bob Cutler, D.O.A.'s unsound soundman]

Day 2: Tuesday, 13 July,

5:48 AM

Sunrise, west of Boise, two huge cups of shitty coffee. BLACK SABBATH's "Children of the Grave" is on. I got the truck up to 75 mphpure natural speed, man...l'm racing a train across this arid valley, I catch up, but shit, Woody Guthrie ain't on it....Later, we stop at Desert Winds, which sounds nice. It's a stop within Mountain Home, but hey, the food is a fuckin' Burger King. Oh well, the gas attendant was nice, he gave me a free gas cap. Life is good. The brisket sandwich from Valli is good, but half of it has been sitting in the cooler water all night, Oh well, waste not, want not.

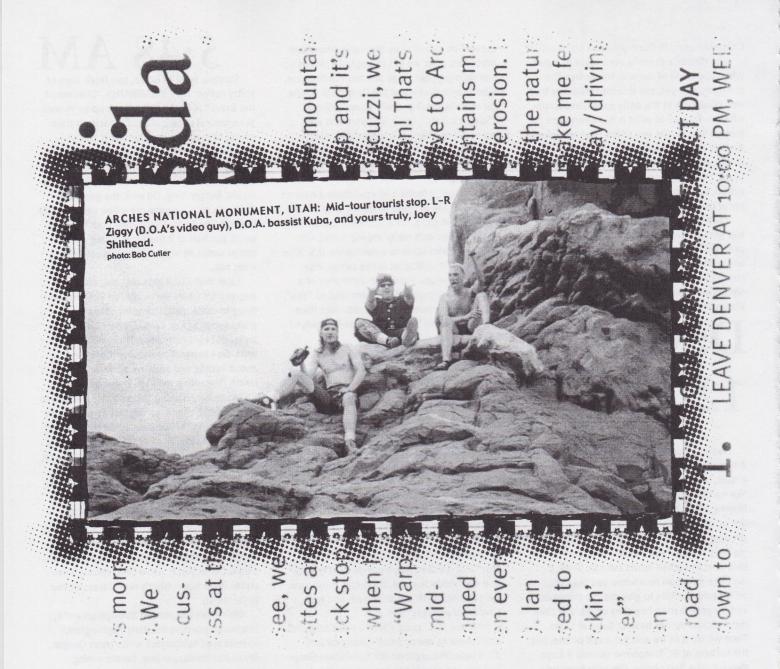
Later that day it gets real hot, about 90 degrees F. I figure we're idle, so let's do something to while away the miles. Bones suggests knock poker. I resist. I don't feel lucky, but I play anyways, I'm right, Kuba wins. So I suggest something more fun-how about folding and stapling 2000 Sudden Death flyers for a mailout. Bone joins in, as do Jan and Kuba. The temperature goes up to 95 degrees F (that's 32 degrees to everybody who ain't a Yank, but after all we're travelling in the good old U.S. of A). It's so hot that the van (which we call Reid Fleming, after a comic book milkman), becomes "Joey's Mobile Sweatshop". They start asking for raises, coffee breaks, and benefits. "Fold," I say. "How about reinvesting your money in my bank in the Grand Cayman Islands?" (that's what Saul Zaentz did to John Fogerty}. They savagely attack, I'm beaten to a pulp...we'll finish that mailout later. Fuck, we've been through five states in 30 hours (that's real states, all you Easterners!)

We've already plowed through urbanite, Starbucks-guzzling Western Washington, unemployed lumberjack white trash Oregon, Aryan Nation-supporting, potato-eating Idaho, and money-grubbing Mormon HQ in Utah. Now we're obviously in Colorado, which is recovering after the Littleton massacre. What else can America absorb? A lot, I suspect.

Day 3: Wednesday, 14 July

I wake up in Texas, Dumas to be exact, which we had renamed "Dumbass, Texas" on our las't trip through. It's typical small town Texas, worn out, rusty, and unpainted for 30 years. I guess Govenor George Bush Jr. and his pals keep all the money down in Dallas and Houston.

Fuck, was that a hot drive. Amarillo to Ft.



Worth. We got here at 5 PM. Motel 6 as usual. It was 100 degrees F. today. We're just outside of Dallas, and they're already talking about the Dallas Cowboys (yes, I know that the Dallas Stars are the only actual champions from around here). Cowboys training camp starts this week, so at least everybody knows where to go to score crack. Uh Oh! There's a big-ass cockroach walking around the parking lot, just like the one outside Biafra's place which I fried in the heater.

Got to run dear diary, we'll be seeing D.R.I. in Houston tomorrow, a kind of warm-up for the tour.

Day 4: Thursday,

15 July, morning

We head from the Motel 6 to the Waffle house, the usual routine. We head up to Dallas airport to pickup Bob Cutler (who's flying in from Lawrence, Centre of the Universe, Kansas).

We're parked in the employees temporary parking at the 'port, and everybody splits to find Bob. A security guy comes up all mad and nervous, with one hand on his gun and the other on his radio. He's mad, and the boys arrive back with Bob. We instantly make friends with security when he finds out we're Canadian. He starts giving us folksy advice about the sights to see, where to fish, and

the best route to Houston. We tell him we're headed to New Orleans the next day, and he says "Christ, we got dry heat here, but down there it's so humid that it only has to be 85 degrees and you feel like someone is pissing on you constantly.

Our show is at Fitzgerald's in Houston. SPUNK, a cool Houston band, lit off some pyrotechnics, and a spark went through a vent above the stage into the attic, setting the joint on fire-a real barnburner. They clear the upstairs. The stage guys and the D.O.A. firefighters go into action and put it out. Hey, I got into this shit to light some fires, though this isn't exactly what I had in mind. But it was a job well done. The show resumes, and D.R.I. gets on stage; they blitz and it's great, like another homecoming. Kurt has moved back to Houston.

D.O.A. hits the stage about midnight. It

goes well but some stupid shits, particularly one short-haired bonehead, act like it's a rollerball revival in the pit. Eventually the locals have had enough and administer the boots to him. The fight moves outside and the crowd thins out in time-honored bullshit. The people who stayed inside were cool, though, and we treated them to a version of ZZ TOP's "La Grange". It's funny, Billy Gibbons, one of my real guitar heros, came down with the flu and couldn't make it. He sent his best wishes, though.

Back at the hotel, we jump the fence for the pool at 3 AM. Boy, does that feel great.

Day 5: Friday, 16 July

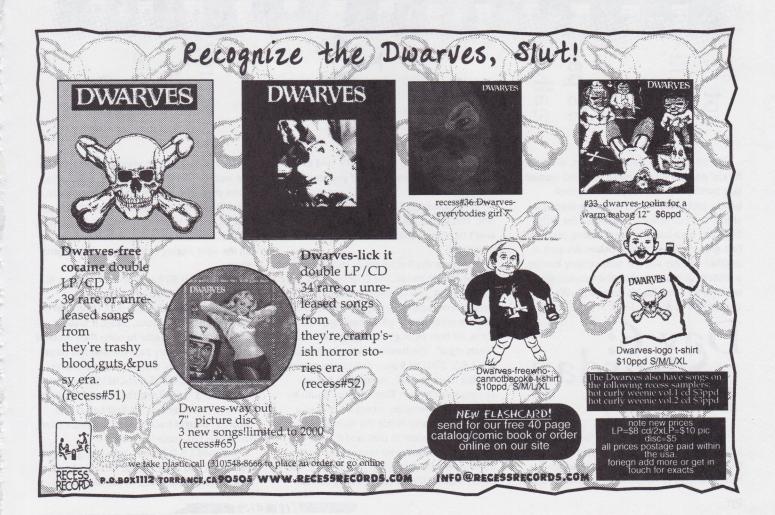
Up at 8 AM. We're off like a herd of turtles to New Orleans, on the way on the I-10. If you get a chance, stop at the Tiger Fuel stop east of Baton Rouge. They have caged Bengal Tigers in this ridiculously small cage. Jan said "That tiger looks a little bit gaunt". I suggested that we somehow get him out so that he could fatten up on the owner of Tiger

Fuels, ripping him asunder, then chowing down

Uh, oh. Bob took a wrong turn. He missed the sign that said "New Orleans", even though it was a very big fucking sign. Now we're really late. I think back to the first time we played in New Orleans in 1982. After the show, a friend of ours named Jessica Goldfinch (a longtime N.O. scenester and artist) and her pal, said (in real Southern accents) "If you boys need a place to stay, you can stay on my Daddy's houseboat on the lake. We replied, in the tongue of the icebacks, "Sure, sounds like fun!" Anyway, Jessica and her pal drop us off at the houseboat, Dimwit goes through the drug selection, since the houseboat owner is a doctor, and we crash out . The next morning at 8 AM the door of the houseboat swings open, and it's "Daddy", a 60-year old, grey-haired doctor. "What the hell are you boys doing here?," he demanded. We mumbled our best explanation, to which the doctor replied, "I'm coming back in 5 minutes with the police!" Well, you never saw anybody get dressed so fast, like we had all been dropped at the North Pole buck naked.

Sorry, I digress, back to our recent tour. After a bunch more wrong turns, we arrive 2 hours late. But hey, it's at the State Palace, the first "Social Chaos" date. Everybody's already there, and we run into T.S.O.L. on the street. It's good to see old comrades-in-arms again. Charlie and the SUBS are there. SLOP-PY SECONDS are on stage, rockin'. We go to eat, and we're not back by the fuckin' time the stage manager wanted us there. He has told Bone, the roadie, that he'll keep us from playing, and that we won't get paid. Fuck that. Over his dead body. We ain't driving 2,700 miles through this insane heat to get cut. So we do get to play. Stage manager "Tool" says, "Hey, we're behind schedule, do you mind shortening your set?" We agree to play for 20 minutes, although we were supposed to play for 30 minutes. But after about 17 minutes, he goes "O.K, that's it." I say "fuck that, you'll have to drag me off this stage", and then we launch into "Race Riot", BLACK FLAG's "Nervous Breakdown", and "The Prisoner" before vacating the stage.

My old buddy D.H. Peligro is there, and he and his band stomp through their set. Back at the merch booth everything is soaked from the coke and beer that have been pouring down the steps into our booth. Since we were late, we got the last and shittiest spot. We stay for the U.K. SUBS' set, which ended with amps falling over and guitars crashing on the ground.





We hoof it off to Bourbon Street, which is fuckin' packed with drunken men and women, jazz bands, rock bands, pseudo-zydeco bands, pickpockets, and cops. We stop at a stand, buy Hurricanes, and cruise the Strip. Strippers on a balcony are throwing condoms to a group of waiting men below. We stop at another counter and get some cherry bombs, a mixture of grain alcohol and tabasco sauce, which is shit. Finally, it's time to go. We overnight it to Austin, Texas

Day 6: Saturday, 17 July

5:48 AM. Cutler is too tired to drive, so we just stop and crash. We have the windows all the way down, but within 5 minutes I am lying in a pool of sweat. Kuba gets up at 6:28,

since he can't stand the heat. It's kind of like that "X-Files" episode where if you stop driving, you die.

We're almost in Austin, and it's raining like shit. This is bad. All the punks with mohawks won't be able to come, since their 'doos will be ruined.

We get to the Backroom-Austin-Outside stage for local bands. The COMMIES are on, and it's good. I try to enjoy it, but stage manager Tool is freaking out again. All the bands that are supposed to go on early are not there. He tells us to go on at 3:30, and I say "yeah, right". The bands eventually do show. The L.E.S. STITCHES play, and things go well. The big room is...well, roomy. D.O.A. had already been here in March for the South by Southwest convention, where we staged a road hockey game inside the club. We got Texans to volunteer to play, and it soon became obvious why no Texans play for the Dallas Stars. Back to the gig, where the real chaos ensues. Bands start beefing about

where they're going to play in the lineup. We get ready, and we're told "you're on at 4:30, make that 5:30, no, it's 6:30, wait a minute, 7:30. Eventually we play at 9:00. It goes well. I chuck a beer bottle at Bone (this is planned, controlled chaos, of course), but it smashes on the light rigging and I shower myself with glass.

The BUSINESS had a powerful set, as did CHELSEA. The VIBRATORS were good, although some of the kids didn't quite get their brand of rock/punk. Sadly, it takes a while for certain people to open their musical and social dictionary past the first few pages they stumble onto. One of the great things about the VIBRATORS and CHELSEA is that the former's first LP and the latter's "Right to Work" 7" were among the first half-dozen records I bought back in 1977. 22 years later, the wheel has come full circle.

I missed T.S.O.L., who were on right after us, since I was manning the Athiests booth that we run. Meanwhile, in the very small,

doorless backstage area, Bone and a few others walk in on one of the ANTI-HEROS shagging a bird. Bone catches it on video, and his bandmates were yelling "you can tell it's him!" - they were in the missionary position "Look at all the pimples on his fucking ass!" We were on our way at about 11 PM, and stopped for gas in the middle of nowhere. We gas up and were just leaving, when this van pulls up beside us on the driver's side, yelling. We look back, see that somebody in our entourage has failed to take the gas hose out, and that we've ripped it out of the pump. A cop stops ahead of us, and then we stop...he finally leaves, and we drive about 50 feet and give the gas hose the old heave-ho!

Day 7: 18 July

Lawrence, Kansas. We've been driving all night and wake up in Kansas, with its beautiful green rolling countryside and cheap gas. But the food selection is shitty. Bob Cutler gives us a tour of his home town, Topeka. We arrive in Lawrence, only about a 700 mile overnight drive, at about 3 PM.

It's a great show, I see T.S.O.L for the first time on this tour, but the show had started late and they only played about 7 or 8 songs, They were real, real good. U.K. SUBS went down well, with Giz [from the DEAD LAZLOS] playing drums, It's only his third show, and he's doing fine. My compatriots think he is doing real well after he forgot his pot in our van, but that's what pot does for you. Lawrence is always great. Like Denver it's one of those crossroads in American writing and adventure where people like the Cassidys, the Burroughs, and the Kerouacs have all dropped in. Get the picture? But there's a bunch of bitching, not so much by the American bands but instead by some (though not all) of the English blokes. The food's not right, the beer's not right, the gear is not right, etc. That's tough, guys, but this is still punk rock and you can't have a bowl of M&M's minus the blue ones.

We head out after the show for Bob's parents' place in Topeka, Kansas. I eat a really mouldy burrito and pass out.

Day 8: Monday, 19 July

We have a day off in Kansas. Carry on, my wayward son, 'cause Bob Dole is a son of a gun. Sorry, that's terrible, but then Bob Dole wouldn't care, Bob Dole is not stupid, Bob Dole doesn't really need Viagra. Wow, a FUCKING DAY OFF. Chores, faxes, e-mails, phone calls, laundry, a shower. As we like to say, us D.O.A. guys only take a shower once every 6 months or so, whether we need it or not. It's late, and we're going to Denver. GOOD NIGHT!

Day 9: Tuesday, 20 July

Denver, Colorado. We woke up this morning at a lousy fuckin' fillthy truck stop. We leave without eating after an asshole customer throws his money at the waitress at the till because he was tired of waiting.

At the next greasy truck stop we see, we pull in. It's time to crap, but both toilettes are plugged up. Yup, it's another filthy truck stop, I wander back from the greasy buffet when I hear "Hey, Joe". I look up and see Ian "Warp 9" Stein, our old soundman from the mideighties (the "Warp 9" nickname stemmed from his ability to turn it up and deafen everybody: "Turn it up to Warp 9, Scottie!"). lan was an Alberta oil worker who also used to manage FLIPPER. Now there was a fuckin' band for you}. Bass player "Will Shatter" (R.I.P.) was the first person I met in San Francisco in 1978 during D.O.A.'s first road trip, We started our kinship by going down to Fisherman's Wharf and scaring all the tourists by pissing in the potted plants. Again, I digress. Ian Warp 9 is now a truck driver. He shows me his discount punch card from the Mustang ranch, where you get the tenth blow job for free.

On into Denver. Us and the U.K. SUBS are the first bands to arrive at the venue, the Atzlan Theatre. We set up the merch, and I get my first chance to meet Nicky Garrett, who can throw his guitar up a million miles in the air, catch it, and not miss a riff - a real living legend. He's a little curious about Sudden Death Records, so I show him "Puck Rock, Vol. 2", our hockey/punk release. He says that hockey involves no skill, unlike soccer. Eh?! Fuck, the gauntlet has been well and truly thrown down. Within five minutes a game is on inside the puked on, pissed on, condom-strewn, broken glass-filled alley behind the delapitated theater. But the U.K.SUBS versus D.O.A. is no ordinary game, as half the guys are using hockey sticks and the other half are just using their feet on the soccer ball. We call it "Sockey", and anything goes. It's hard fought, but Alvin of the SUBS, a prospect for Crystal Palace, evens the score at 3-3, It's 100 degrees F., and we've all had enough. A team photo follows. We all agree to combine British and Canadian forces against the Yanks in a game of American Football. [Ed.-now there's a real game, which you arrogant foreigners can't hope to even learn how to play, much less win!]

The gig follows. It's the best one so far. VICE SQUAD totally thrills the crowd, no doubt mainly because the plethora of young boy's are entranced by Becki Bondage's powerful persona. The ANTI-HEROS whip up some frenzy whilst stomping around, and Peligro is again on the money, though not predictable enough for some.

Day 10: Wednesday, 21 July

It's off. We've driven into the mountains and caught a motel. We wake up and it's beautiful. There's an outdoor jacuzzi, we don't hesitate to use it (Hey, man! That's not Punk Rock!). Who cares? We drive to Arches National Park in Utah, which contains massive arches created by weather erosion. It's extraordinary, and as per usual the natural beauty of the world helps to make me feel alive and fufilled. This is a off day/driving day, so Bone makes plans...

OUR PLAN FOR A PERFECT DAY

- LEAVE DENVER AT 10:00 PM, WEDNES DAY, AFTER WE'RE PAID
- 2. DRIVE 246 MILES TO GRAND JUNC
 TION, SLEEP AT MOTEL 6
- 3. GET UP EARLY. GO TO ARCHES, 11 TILL 4
 BOOK A ROOM AT CIRCUS CIRCUS
 - DRIVE TO LAS VEGAS
- O. GAMBLE:

1:15 AM: lose all money. 1:20 AM: wallow in self-pity. 1:30 AM: discover Bible in motel room 1:45 AM: track down Joe, plead for more cash.

1:46 AM: find one quarter, sit in front of slot machine depositing and retrieving the same 25 cents, so that you keep getting free drinks.

3:27 AM: get carried out by security.

Day 11: Thursday, 22 July

Well, we're in Las Vegas at the Circus, Circus Hotel. Oops, there's one thing I forgot. As we left Green River, Utah, which is just past The Arches, we were getting gas and food when all these emergency vehicles went screaming by, sirens ablazing. We left Green in every way you can think of. The semi's shipment of boxes was crushed and scattered everywhere. I thought back to that ambulance, which was carrying the driver back so slowly...no rush...no hurry...no life...no worry.

Speaking of twisted, fucked up things, I

It's the hottest day yet — 107degrees. The gig is a fucking shmozzle, with poor advance sales. The promoters start it five hours late in order to lower staff costs, and then cut the first ten bands's sets down to 15 minutes. This is just stooopid. The bouncers throw out



River about half and hour later, and notice the ambulance coming back really slowly. By the time we reached the mountains, we had learned why since we passed the worst truck wreck I've seen in 21 years of travelling. A truck had been coming down the pass, and it was now crushed, smashed, ripped, and torn read Hunter Thompson's Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas when I was 18, but you can't really comprehend this classic completely — if you ever do — until you actually go to Vegas. It's all glittery and plastic, and epitomizes America as much as the Vatican reveals Italy's past and ongoing indulgence.

two women for flashing their breasts. The bassist' of Sloppy Seconds[??] continually moons the crowd as we play "The Enemy", turning it into a real showstopper. We head back to Circus Circus after some delays in getting paid. I try my hand at gambling, and I lose again. But this time I'm a little smarter,

since I don't lose as much. The rest of the boys go and party with D.R.I at the Sahara.

Day 12: Friday, 23 July

We get an early start, since we need tranny service for the truck. We take the #93 to the Hoover Dam. Dam(n), it's incredible. The landscape looks like the moon (like I've been there). It's a slow go, and we're late for the Phoenix show. But on the way down #93 to Kingman, Arizona, I saw more Joshua trees than King Solomon. Arizona is weird, since there's even graffiti on the cacti.

We are wildly late. We find the venue, and I run in the door. The Vibrators, who are one of the openers, are already playing. We're not late, after all. Everything else is late, as usual, since stage manager Tool couldn't organize a lynching at a Klan rally. Our set goes great, although Kuba's bass amp stops working and he gets a little pissed.

D.R.I. is up next. They're great, and the crowd completely loves it. But there's a beeftheir power was cut off, and they got pissed off 'cause they're set was cut short. Finally, they let them do a well-deserved encore. At this point Steve, the guitarist for the BUSI-NESS, wanted to cut their power during the encore, and a long discussion/argument later ensued between Steve and Chumbly, D.R.I.'s bassist.

We play hockey in the street at 11PM. Jack from T.S.O.L. joins in. I grab him to try and stop him, so he tries to trip me, Then he does the old "I'll make you sing soprano" hockey trick-jamming the stick between the legs up into your balls. Jack was born in Saskatchewan, so he's a natural at this ploy. We leave.

Day 13: 24 July

We wake up in Blithe, California, in the blazing desert. During our breakfast at the Courtesy Café (which was less than courteous), two 30ish women and their family overhear us and ask if we're in a band. "Yeah, we're D.O.A." "Oh I know your band and T.S.O.L.," she continues, "Hey, I heard a new Dead Kennedys song on the radio. But it wasn't so hard, it was softer." "Yeah", I say, "that's their new mellow sound." They leave and then come back, wanting tickets for the

L.A. shows.

We arrive at the Orange Pavillion in San Bernardino, California, 35 miles from L.A. 2000 people show up, which is the biggest crowd so far. I miss a bunch of the bands. As usual, the ANTI-HEROS have a really strong presence and a devoted following, and they hit it hard and fast. Peligro sounds good and tight as usual, but the kids don't know their stuff so a lot of them just hang outside. We play next-we chainsaw them, we highstick them, we double-time them, and it's a friendly pit, too. The punters tell me that people got picked up if they fell down. Geez, that's not the L.A. that I know! We leave after T.S.O.L. plays. Jack keeps imploring people to fuck shit up: "I've got \$300 cash for the first major injury." What a great show! We are able to leave because Jan has changed the water pump on the van outside the show; what a handy guy. We hit Interstate 5. California has always been a home away from home for us, and we've probably played in S.F. and L.A. 100 times each.

Day 14: 25 July

We wake up at a rest stop on the I-5. Bob has driven all night, and we cruise on into SF's Maritime Hall at around 12:30 PM. Some geek says that there's no show, since the gig's been cancelled. Fuck that, it's got to be on, since S.F. is one of the original punk rock towns. The gig is in fact on. Since we are early, we've got time for a little hockey inside the hall, Finally, the key play — I set Ziggy up for a perfect shot, and he delivers-a one timer to Kuba's nuts. Kuba is down, then he throws his gear and a few mock punches. At 4 PM, our posse from the East Bay/Reno show up, including Tom Borghino, Dim (the original singer for 7 SECONDS), Cliff, Teri, J.D. Levi, and we head out for our traditional S.F. burri-

After we get back to the hall, Ziggy videos the gathering crowd and the hall. KABOOM! The next thing I know, Ziggy and Boot (the Maritime Hall production guy), are in a virtual wrestling match on the ground, fighting over the video tape, which also contains our last two or three days of adventures. With the help of 20 large security guys, Boot eventually manages to get hold of the tape and break it in half, a mysterious action with no fuckin' explanation. I get ahold of Boot's dad, the manager of the Hall, and give him the scoop. It turns out that CHELSEA has also had their tape seized and smashed. Spike from D.R.I. hears of this, and also raises shit on our

behalf. Meanwhile I go thru the trash and retrieve the broken tapes, which should still work. It turns out that our camera was on while the scuffle ensued, so maybe we should send it to Bob Saget of "America's Funniest Home Videos".

The show must go on. The VIBRATORS are really on tonight, and our set goes great. I rev up my chainsaw for "Lumberjack City". I yell at the crowd that we Canadians have fucked up and cut down everything up North, so now we'ye come to look for things to cut up here in S.F. I jump down into the audience, and a woman right in front lifts up her shirt and offers up her very large breasts for the saw. I decline and shave a few necks instead.

Updates: First, Chumbly quits D.R.I. after doing his last show. Too bad. I've really been enjoying D.R.I., and Chumbly's been a lot of fun to hang with. Second, in the foyer at the hall, Tool and production assistant Chris "Ironface" get into a yelling match instigated by Tool. They start pushing and shoving, Tool yells for security, and they start to wrestle and writhe around on the floor. Tool yells even louder for security, Chris, who is quite a bit smaller, starts to get the better of things. After security finally arrives, they put Tool in a headlock! Later that night Tool is fired.

Day 15: Monday, 26 July

Another driving/off day. Why is it that these so-called "off days" are always mother-fuckin' long drives? We drive up to Seattle, a nice 880-mile drive. I drop the guys off in Tacoma, where Kuba's girlfriend Valli lives. I meet my family in northern Washington, which is great since my little guy Clayton turns 3 tommorow.

Day 16; Tuesday, 27 July

We have a little party for Clayton. I take off at noon.

I get to the DV8 venue in Seattle at 3:30, which is right by the city's figurative cock. The Space Needle has just been purchased by a private buyer, so maybe it will end up with a big MICROSOFT logo on one side and a STAR-BUCKS or BOEING logo on the other , with a large replica of Kurt Cobain on top. (Incidentally, when I came to Seattle to see the 1962 World's Fair when I was 6, the Space

Needle had just been built. It was a big attraction, but my old man was too "thrifty" to pay for a ride up to the top.) I meet Blaine and John from the FARTZ outside the show. Along with the FASTBACKS, these guys were the real shit for Seattle, so it was cool to see them.

The show turns out to be good. Again, there was a breast exposure in the middle of our set, but this time they objects in question were completely tatooed. At this gig no beer was provided, so we're forced to "liberate" some. In the old days we were always sneaking under the fence of the local brewery, and loading up with 10 or 20 cases-we called ourselves "The Carling O'Keefe Liberation Army, East Vancover HQ", since Carling O'Keeke used to be one of big breweries in Vancouver. Alas, the word gets out quickly that us Canadians-and no one else-have the beer. The van party starts. It quickly fills up with 15 people, including members of VICE SQUAD, the U.K.SUBS, and the ANTI-HEROS. There's a queue of people outside the door waiting for a seat. We booze it up with the amazing Becki Bondage, the indomitable Nicky Garrett, the ever-wise Charlie Harper, and other punks. This is the fuckin' party. There are no cops. Life is good, life is just.

Day 17: Wednesday, 28 July

We wake up in Tacoma. Down on the corner, one of Valli's neighbors has three old cars in front of his house. If the hood is up, and the guy's under the hood, that means he's got crack for sale. People lean under the hood with their money, and do the transactions on top of the air filter cover. If the hood's down, he's not open for business.

We get bum directions, and a bum steer on a Federal Express location, and lose a couple of hours. At 5:30 we arrive at Portland's Roseland Hall, where we played with the RAMONES in 1982. The show is already in full swing. There are a lot of Canadians here, making for a pleasant degree of familiarity. Britain's ONE WAY SYSTEM put on a very strong show, as do the ANTI-HEROS, who have to preface every set with "We are not racist", thanks to the fuckin' idiots who did the Nazi skinhead movie "American History X" and used the ANTI-HEROS' logo on the lead actor's arms without getting permission.

After our set, there's a big party in the van. Tim from Eugene, Roberto, and our long-time Portland pal Christeen Aebi were there, drinking Fuzzy Navels, i.e., cranberry juice with vodka. AC/DC's "Rock 'n' Roll

Damnation" serves as our bloody theme song, since I've had it in the deck for 4 days. Suddenly it's 1 AM, time to fuck off to Minneapolis, which is only a mere 1700+ miles distant. Fuck, there goes our "day off", but hopefully we'll be too hungover to notice.

Day 18: Thursday, 29 July

Our truck inexplicably dies in Idaho. I get a nice old guy to jump start it. We spend two hours that we don't have trying to get a spare alternator in Missuola, Montana. We don't find one. The cook at the restaurant recognizes us, and it turns out that he's still got our set list from our last show in Missoula. This is cool, since it probably means that he didn't spit in our food. Fuck, it's hot again. We drive, and drive, and drive, and...

Day 19: Friday, 30 July

...drive, and drive, and drive, and drive...We finally get to Minnesota, which is close to Canada. There is a lot of rain, thanks to a big time storm. We set up and play at the 400 Bar in Minneapolis. Our old buddy Eric from K.C. is there, but otherwise the gig is uneventful. Soul Asylum is playing a free show down the street. Bob drives after the show.

Day 20; Saturday, 31 July

We arrive in Milwaukee at 8 AM. There's nowhere to go, and nowhere to stay. We head down to the Milwaukee Arena. It's "Metal Fest" weekend, and for some odd reason the "Social Chaos" tour has been incorporated into it. We get to the venue at 9:00 AM, totally tired and spaced out, then go for breakfast at the Hyatt Hotel, It's a ripoff, and to add insult to injury they stick us in a far, far corner of the restaurant. By the time we get back, the show has already started.

L.E.S. Stitches start playing at 11 AM. We sneak into a closed area, find some beer and "liberate" it. Let me tell you, this affair is a

real collection of fans, freaks, and wannabe's. There are four seperate stages, with 10 to 20 bands on each as the day goes by. There is an endless barrage of cookie monster vocals and sheeting guitars. I say "check these guys out", and Bob Cutler retorts, "I've already seen these guys, since they seem to restart their set every 15 minutes". There are "rock festival" attractions everywhere, including endless merch tables lined up with various paraphrenalia, all with the same illegible writing. We see T-shirts with phrases such as "BORN TO FUCK", "AT LEAST I'M NOT GAY", and "GET DOWN ON YOUR KNEES FOR CHRIST AND SUCK MY COCK".

There's one booth with two "adult" movie stars, where both women sign and sell their movies and copies of the mags they've been featured in. The coolest part is a booth featuring Quebecois wrestling brothers Mad Dog Vachon and the Butcher, who patiently sign their photos.

Back to the "Chaos" show. MURPHY'S LAW finally join the tour, and today they're really on. It's a great show. We start with "Electric Funeral", but Kuba slips on some water and puts himself wildly out of tune. So Jan and I play "Folsom Prison Blues". When we get to "Lumberjack City", T.S.O.L.'s sound man Ed runs out with the saw and terrorizes the crowd. We've only played for about 10 minutes when I get word that we're only supposed to play one more song. I say "Fuck that shit", and we begin tramping through a few more tracks. When our finale "The Prisoner" starts, they pull the plug on the P.A. Damn! So I run over and crank up both of my amps, and we finish and come off the stage. Jan tells the stage manager "You're lucky you didn't get your fuckin' head kicked in!", and Kuba calls him a cocksucker. I remain uncharacteristically silent, but the next thing I know they've chucked Kuba out of the venue and the production guys are screaming at me and threatening to throw me out and not pay us. I tell them what's up in a reasoned way, which usually works, and fortunately it did on this occasion as well. I stay at the gig, they pay us, and it's over.

Later we see Havoc, the singer from ONE WAY SYSTEM, who tells us that they cut the power on them too. Once again, there is a memorable party going on in our van. Pumpy, the drummer from VICE SQUAD, passes out in front of our van, presumably in honor of guitarist Paul's birthday. It then turns into a parking lot party.

At dinner, MURPHY'S LAW singer Jimmy Gestapo starts loudly haranguing the death metal bands, as he did while onstage. "Look at them, they've got "666" tatooed on their foreheads, yet they're wincing at my smashing an egg roll. It's fucking pathetic." The

older production guy comes by, and Jimmy wings an egg roll at him. The guy starts to start some shit, but of course he gets laughed at. Later he comes back with head honcho Jack and his security goons. Jimmy further ridicules the production guy. He's a fuckin' live wire, and it's hilarious. What fun! The punks stir up some shit, there are tons of goofy looking metal heads, and no shortage of entertainment. Finally, it's time to bid adieu

tryside in Indiana and Ohio-school bus factories, pig farms, thousands of Buckeyes bumper to bumper. We find the show at the Metro in Columbus, which turns out to be a big wherehouse deal with an outdoor stage. We play last, but when it gets really dark Paul from VICE SQUAD holds up a large flashlight so we can see what notes we are playing. Wow, what a fucking concept-lights outside for the stage.

He runs out and grabs some hockey sticks, an axe handle, and a large flashlight. The cops arrive, and confiscate a hockey stick from Spike (D.R.I.). About three hours of huffing and puffing ensue. (Oh yeah, I forgot to mention one other incident. There was a Budweiser beer wagon in the courtyard where we played, but someone forgot to lock it. While the crowd watched, Bone went inside to have a look. When he discovered a



to the "Metal Fest". We hop in the van, and whisk on down through Chicago towards Columbus, Ohio.

Day 21: Sunday, 1 August

Yet another Motel 6, and yet another waffle house. This time we stopped in Indianapolis. Jeez, there's lots of boring counBut this turned out to be just a preliminary event, because the "fun" was just starting. The club demands a percentage of the t-shirt sales, but D.R.I. refuses and the club people use a vehicle to block them in. At around the same time we hear a rumor that the club won't pay the bands their money because somebody went backstage, past the dressing rooms and into the offices, and then glued the phones shut and poured beer into the computers. I am informed that we won't get paid, I pick up a table and fling it high against the wall, smashing off the top. A security guy freaks out. I find Bone and tell him what's up.

tap with beer in it, the crowd temporarily disappeared, only to reappear with buckets, glasses, and water bottles. These were then filled, imbibed, and refilled, ad infinitum. MURPHY'S LAW and the ANTI-HEROS each took off with a key. The only problem was that the beer being consumed was Budweiser, which is fuckin' shitty!)

Finally, the promoter comes out from backstage to address the waiting bands. He now changes his story, and tells the 25 or so musicians that he's withholding a bunch of money for damage to the bathrooms. I step forward and call him a liar and a ripoff, a sen-



outside. All of a sudden the cops get an emergency call and are all forced to split in a hurry! Lucky us. All of a sudden the security guys wilt and stop acting so tough. They run inside, but forget to lock the door. Kuba kindly informs them of their blunder, so they run out again and lock things up. We hung around for a while longer, but that pretty well wrapped things up. A few nails were inserted into tires, but not much else was going on. We then go to crash at our newfound pal Jeremy's (who had been working at the "liberated" Budwiser wagon), drink some wine and beer, and then crash out. There's a mysterious knock at the door around 7 AM, and peo-

fucked-up day!

Day 22: Monday, 2 August

We have an unexpected off day. The show in Detroit was cancelled because some chickenshit promoter freaked out. We finally get new tires. Allright! Maybe we won't die en route now. We drive to Pittsburgh, and run into the VIBRATORS at the Motel 6. They drop

Day 23: Tuesday, 3 August

Another off day. We hang out in downtown Pittsburgh, which is kinda cool. For once, that's all I've got to say.

Day 24:

Wednesday, 4 August

The Pittsburgh gig is at the Metropol/Rosebub on the strip. There's a big sign nearby that reads "DON'T MAKE ME COME DOWN THERE!-GOD". We arrive at 4 PM. Shit, I forgot! We were supposed to meet Mario Lemeiux for lunch!

It turns out to be a pretty good show. We had our warm-up with Jack from T.S.O.L., who was winging a football across a huge mass of traffic and trying to nail people. So I kicked back up on top of the roof.

We take off early. We've got to hustle to N.Y.C., and we've already been in Pittsburgh for over two days.

We drive to another Motel 6 in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, which is "3 Mile Island" territory; we always pick the dumps 'cause they don't care how many people pile into a room. In this instance, there is a metalhead guy at the reception desk. He says he's got one room left, but no keys for it, which causes me to retort, "Oh, so that's where you keep the bodies!" He laughs. When he finds out we're in D.O.A., he says, "Oh, I know you guys, I used to be in EXIT 13. We were on Relapse records, but we spent our advance on drugs. It was good at first, but after awhile the record companies always just rip you off..."

Day 25: Thursday, 5 August

We get to Tramps on 21st Street in N.Y.C. at about 4 PM. Tramps is right across from the Chelsea Hotel, where Sid Vicious (R.I.P.) cooked it. CHELSEA, the band, naturally rent rooms there as well. It's a "really big, big shoe tonight", as Ed Sullivan would say. The gig starts at about 6 PM with a local band whose name I unfortunately missed. Then it's the VIBRATORS, who rock out. Mykel Board drops by the booth, wearing a shirt that says "Old punks never die-they just do spoken word".

The huge dressing rooms downstairs are packed with hangers-on and scenesters. We encounter numerous old friends, including Vinnie from AGNOSTIC FRONT and Jack Rabid from *The Big Takeover* magazine (my best pal in NYC), Cathy Cleghorn, and even Dave Gregg (D.O.A.'s guitarist from 1980 to 1988), which was really a pleasant surprise. I haven't seen Dave in eight or nine years, and we practically grew up together on the road,

back when we pretty well toured year-round. He's a super guy, and it was great to see him again.

Back to the show. It's insanely hot inside. The stage is packed with people as the ANTI-HEROS go through their usual powerful set. We go on at about 9 PM, and for once we actually get a little extra time to play. We get Bob Cutler to play bass, and Bone joins in on guitar as Kuba fronts and sings the SUBHU-MANS' classic "Slave to my Dick". We finish with "Nervous Breakdown" and our very own "The Prisoner". A guy from California jumps up and sings along with me on "Nervous Breakdown"; later, we see that very same guy outside and needing stitches as a result of a biff during the BUSINESS' set. Christ, everything was sweat-drenched, dirty, and scummy-there were broken cups and bottles everywhere, and lots and lots of lunatics around "fucking shit up". Bone was outside on the sidewalk and after many jackass gin drinks, he started up the chainsaw. A cop smirks, and Bone turns off the saw. Then the cop says "Hey, give me that, start that thing up!" Bone obliges, and the cop grabs the saw and runs off down the street after some guy.

D.O.A. later poses for a photo with the cop. The show ends. We're inside standing around, and some guy is talking to Termy Bones from the BUSINESS. The gorilla-like bouncers start trying to clear people out of venue, and in the process they grab this guy, drag him out, and put his face through the glass doors at the entrance. The guy calls for the cops, who make the bouncers line up outside so that the victim can identify the meatheads who did it and press charges against them. We split, grab some pizza, and head off to Dave Gregg's place for an enjoyable postgig reaquaintance.

Day.26: Friday, 6 August

It's 1 PM, and we're off to Providence. But we'll end up getting there way too late. The traffic is good on the westside highway, but this turns out to be all too fuckin' temporary. We run into a massive traffic jam thanks to road construction, donkey drivers, and the whole shitaroo.

We finally get past New London, Connecticut, home of General Electric, where they make the Trident-class nuclear submarines. In my younger days, we used to play the El-n-Cee club, and we sometimes speculated about launching a bottlerocket attack on the plant. While on the I-95, we hear this horrible sound coming out of our 1988 milkvan Reid Fleming. It sounds to me like we've thrown a rod. Shit! We pull over, but it turns out that a piece of the fan broke off and landed on top of the motor. Phew!

That was a close one, 'cause it could have sliced up the belts or the radiator. We finally find a parts store, and Jan puts on the new fan. We're on our way by 6:30 and are still an hour away from Lupo's Heartbreak Hotel in Providence, Rhode Island. Yeah, that's right, we're fuckin' late for a change. The stage manager Chris runs out and tells us that we have to be on the mainstage in 5 minutes. We run and lift and tune, and then we're on. Despite the chaos, it goes off well. We played a lot of great shows in the Boston area (which is only 40 minutes from Providence) in the old days, and this turned out to be one of our best gigs.

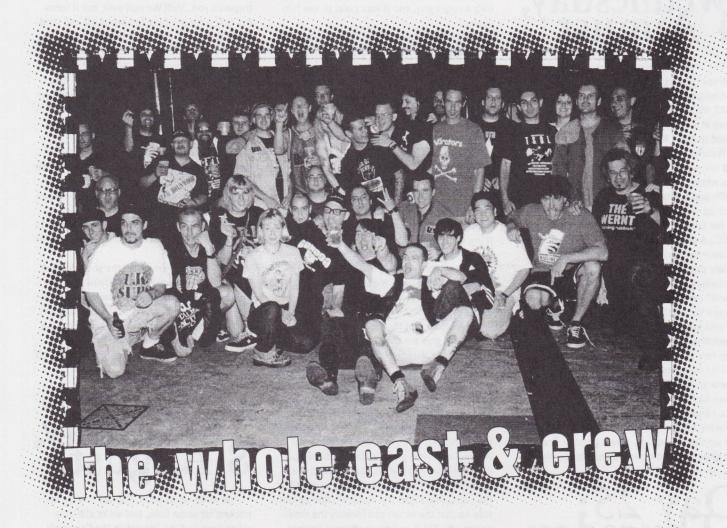
There's a big party after the show, and all the bands are there. A few of them won't be going to Canada-you know, immigration trouble, criminal records, and such. Lots of funny photos are taken and many "last drinks" are chugged, since despite all the fuck-ups it's been fun, a helluva of a lot of fun. We fuck off towards London, Ontario.

Day 27: Saturday, 8 August

We wake up at noon. The van has been packed for some time, and we're still 200 miles from Buffalo. We get to the Canadian border at Niagra Falls about 5:30 PM, where there's a big line-up of traffic. There's always some degree of apprehension when we reenter Canada, which dates back to 1994, when I failed to tell them that we had enough fireworks to make Guy Fawkes blush, along with musical gear, t-shirts, and CDs which we conveniently "forgot" to declare. (See our 1996 song "Je declare" on the "Black Spot" album). Anyways, our soundguy Bob is a Yank. He tells the immigration guy that he works in a cardboard box factory, and is on an 8-week vacation. This totally confuses the guy, and he waves us through without the usual "get out of the van while we bring in the drug dogs" routine.

We play that night in London, Ontario, the STRIKE Boys play, but Chelsea never arrives because they've been held up by Canadian Immigration. We drive on to Toronto. Or, to be more precise, way beyond it...

Day 28:



Sunday, 9 August

We wake up in Scarbourough at noon, outside of a gas station! Hooray, it's Toronto, the site of the last show. We have a performance booked at The Record Peddler, a local record shop on Queen Street, only half a block from the venue at the Big Bop. We set up on the sidewalk, since it was supposed to be an acoustic set. But Jule asked for small amps and a small P.A., and we play "Class War", "Brainwash", and a couple of others. There are 100 people on the sidewalk, and they end up blocking the streetcar. Steve Goof from the BUNCH O' FUCKING GOOFS stops his van in the middle of the Queen Street to watch and further block traffic. We dedicate the next song to the Toronto Metro Police, the SUBHUMANS's classic "Fuck You". The cops finally show up. The record store

guy runs out and talks to the cops. We finish up our last song, and it's on to the show. The door is at 5 PM. We get set up, and the joint starts packin' out quickly. The real question is how many of the American and British bands will make it through Canadian immigration.

A brand new Lincoln Continental pulls up in front. It's T.S.O.L., minus bassist Mike Roche. Ed the soundman is going to fill in for Mike. They all look rather clean cut. Eventually all the bands make it, except for D.R.I. and the ANTI-HEROS, The BUSINESS didn't chance it, either. On the work permit for the U.K. bands, they put everybody's name down as members of the U.K. SUBS. Unaware of this, Charlie comes along late and, after looking at the paper, says "Hey, there are only four of us in the U.K. SUBS." The immigration officials look confused, but in the end they let everyone slide.

The show commences with local bands ARMED AND HAMMERED and BUNCH O' FUCKIN' GOOFS.

We play, all wearing D.O.A. team jerseys

and brandishing hockey sticks. The crowd is nutty but friendly. A drunken young woman decides to lean against my mic stand, and halfway through our set she takes off her shirt and then stage dives into the crowd. We get Bob and Bone up for the encore, "Slave to my Dick". T.S.O.L. played a really short set, since Ed only knew a few songs. This precipitated a fistfight/wrestling match in the office between Toronto promoter Bob Much and tour promoter Randy Wolpin which was broken up by gig publicist Melanie Kaye. Eventually I learned that T.S.O.L. got only 50% of their fee. The U.K. SUBS then go on, and the crowd loves 'em since they've played in Toronto a lot over the years. A naked guy stagedives.

Before the last set, a distraught woman gets up and curses at the crowd. Somebody had stolen her jacket, along with her I.D.s and the food money for her kids, so she yells "Give that back, you asshole! How would you like to suck dicks for a living, you bastard!" She then throws around a few monitors, and

heaves a mic right at Bone's head. He ducks. and is forced to subdue her.

VICE SQUAD is the last up, so they'll close the "Social Chaos" tour, appropriately. They've been very consistent and wellreceived, and are just great. They get the now wasted, stupored crowd into a frenzy. Their encore includes "Yellow Submarine", and then they finish up. That's it. It's all over now, baby blue...except for the "joyous" task of actually getting paid so that we can all get home, FUCK!

The only thing to do is have a street party, Reid Fleming gets parked in front of the Big Bop on Queen Street. Out comes the beer, tequila, whiskey, falafels (from across the street), and the pot. Not all partake, but all the remaining members of the SUBS, MUR-PHY'S LAW, CHELSEA, VICE SQUAD, D.O.A., and some other hungover hangers-on have a shared sense of accomplishment and relief. That's the way any big mission should end.

The Next

I head up to the Gladstone Hotel, Toronto's center for homeless cockroaches. CHELSEA and VICE SQUAD are standing in the donut shop parking lot across the street from the hotel, still waiting to get paid. It's 1 PM. I take off to go for a T.V. show taping. I get back at 5 PM, and VICE SQUAD are still there. I hear that Randy, the man with the cash, has been sauntering around Toronto. Randy finally arrives back sometime after 6. VICE SQUAD are furious. Becky grabs him by the lapels, and starts shaking him around like a rag doll since this delay forces them to drive all night to get back to Boston in time to catch their flight.

Now we're the only ones left. We're back at the Big Bop. I do my acoustic/spoken word/punk rock bedtime story trips for an hour. Then we go see the fabulous Oinkers, and it's great. Strangely, I've never seen them before. We meet the whole band, which is cool.

All that's left is the 3000 miles back to Vancouver. We grab a falafel, Steve Goof comes in, I give him a beer, and we hop in Reid Fleming for that 1300 miles to Winnipeg (we have our own shows there, as well as in Humboldt, Edmonton, Red Deer, and Banff on the way back).

The "chaos" is now gone, the van drifts on, the lakes go by, the wheat keeps growing, the sky is as big as ever, and we're still on that punk rock freeway.

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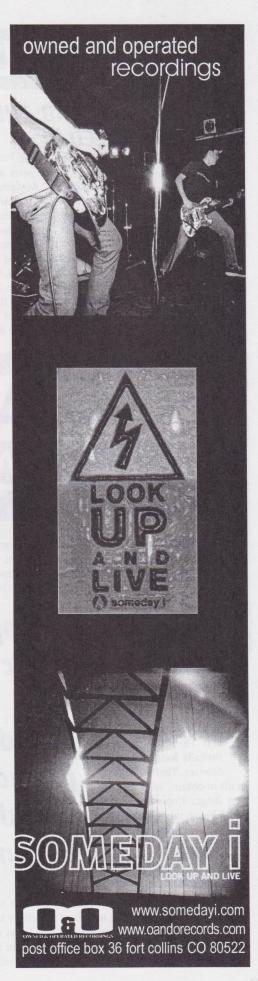
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BRITAIN IS DEAD; THE MUSIC PRESS KILLED IT

nglophilia" in the '90s is an odd phenomenon. 17 to 20 years ago, those painted with this curious, demeaning designation could return the scorn, and rightfully accuse the accuser of being a xenophobic imbecile!

Confronted by someone who automatically rejected any music recorded by members of the human race with a British passport, one could laugh derisively and rattle off a list of thencurrent bands. Buzzcocks, Joy Division, Gang of Four, Teardrop Explodes, Orange Juice, Siouxsie & the Banshees, Killing Joke, the Undertones, Echo & the Bunnymen, the Jam, Comsat Angels, the Stranglers, the Sound, New Model Army, the Clash, the Specials, the Fall, Stiff Little Fingers, the Ruts, Wire, the reconsti-



tuted Damned, and hundreds of lesser-knowns made music both astoundingly great and incredibly unique, more than the equal of the best American talent of that fertile time. The list was endless! (Before that, you could even go back to the absolutely venerated

'77 UK punk bands, the pub rock and Glam eras before them, the '60s psychedelic groups, and even the original, incredible British Invasion 36 years ago.)

Time has elevated these UK "post-punk" groups of two decades ago. They remain bright fireballs long after their demises. Their once difficult-to-obtain releases are no longer imports, and are still being reissued on CD. Young American bands cite them as their inspiration. And those of us who followed these groups early on are justifiably proud of it,

especially in light of some of the crap we took for it at the time. I had long grown tired of having to defend myself for buying pricey imports. I grew even more tired of explaining that I was not, repeat not in love with British culture, nor saw any superiority in it whatsoever (in fact, though I've loved their bands, I've often found the British populace

itself a bit stuffy, if more politically aware), and that I felt just as strongly about music of equal value from the U.S., Canada, Australia, and New Zealand (primarily English-speaking countries, but I also felt the same way about the occasional group from another nation that was knocking my socks or ears off).

Frankly, I never saw why it was such a goddamn issue. One of the great things about music is that it transcends the idiotic, arbitrary boundaries and accompanying prejudices that stubborn mankind has furiously erected century after century, like the dim bulbs we remain and will likely always be ("Star Trek" fantasies to the contrary). It crosses even the strictest political boundaries, as typified by the Beatles assault on the Far East in 1964, when Beatlemania exploded despite the obvious language barrier and social differences (hundreds of rock groups since, from the Police to Bad Religion, have likewise trekked all over Asia and South America to wild receptions, and forbidden, contraband rock records routinely penetrated the Iron Curtain for 30 years before the Wall came down). It also crosses domestic cultural boundaries and helps beat down bigotry, as was demonstrated by the infiltration in the pre-Civil Rights '40s and '50s of what was called "Race Music," i.e. blues, R&B, Jazz, New Orleans boogie, and early Black rock 'n' roll (and later Soul) over the airwaves into segregated white consciousness, long before the first Elvis wandered into Sun Records to record a song for his mama (and long after his ascension, too).

Thus, said I (and others) to those who hated us for buying English records back then, "It's your loss, brother." But as I occasionally trot off to interview some current new "Brit-Pop" group so many years later, I feel that same twinge of knee-jerk distaste and distrust dwell within my own breast. Can this be? What happened to England, anyway?!?!?

While still the home of many superb bands, our former mother country is some kind of joke these days. Where it comes to the music scene, King George III, Townshend, and Lord North couldn't have screwed it up any worse. Its organs for music news, the weekly *Melody Maker* and *NME*, are a mockery of their former greatness, no longer a strong source of info or critique of Blighty talent. In fact, the rapid suc-

cess and subsequent dissemination of the hallowed UK groups of yore was (and now again, in reissue form, is) largely the product of these National magazines' coverage, in the days when our own godawful National music rags such as Rolling Stone and Hit Parader howled about such absolute horse manure as Kansas, Styx, Boston, Dire Straits, Bad Company, and Foreigner. (Rock Scene and Creem were much better, giving space to punk and new wave groups, but were still commercial rock oriented.)

I vividly recall reading Sounds back then, a now-defunct NME competitor, and

observing that in that week, the #1 single in Britain was the intelligent, sociopolitical "Ghost Town" by the Specials (a song that was to music of the Thatcher era what Emile Zola's novel *Germinal* was to Second Empire France, in retrospect), whereas here the charts were topped by the turgid REO Speedwagon!!! This was not at all that unusual circa

One of the great things about music is that it transcends the idiotic, arbitrary boundaries and accompanying prejudices that stubborn mankind has furiously erected century after century.

1982. While the UK charts had their share of unadulterated pap the same as ours, like Chris DeBurgh, unlike here there were always four or five truly challenging artists being embraced in them as well. Bands like the Ruts, the Jam, and even Sham 69 racked up a string of Top 40 hits, beating out the Barbara Streisands, Elton Johns, and Kenny Rogerses of the world in a fair fight like we never even came close to here. The UK press's centralized power in a small nation had a lot to do with it.

But now, ever since the *NME* and *Melody Maker*'s mad ardor in 1992 over the then-recordless (London) Suede (it seemed that singer Brett Anderson was on the cover every week-which then sadly spread to the better monthlies *Select, Vox,* and *Q*), and then the Oasis craze four years later, those papers have gone kabluey only for self-created monsters, only the newest-of-the-new. In the insane rush to exhibit that too-encompassing power to play trendsetter, they promiscuously pump-up and then dump dubious "scenes" that existed solely in their own minds. We've seen them all, one disingenuous, fluffy, featherweight trend after another, from "Madchester" to "Baggy" to "Shoegaze" to "Crusty" to "The New Wave of the New Wave" to I don't even care anymore, to the most dubious of all, their recent "Britpop" obsession.

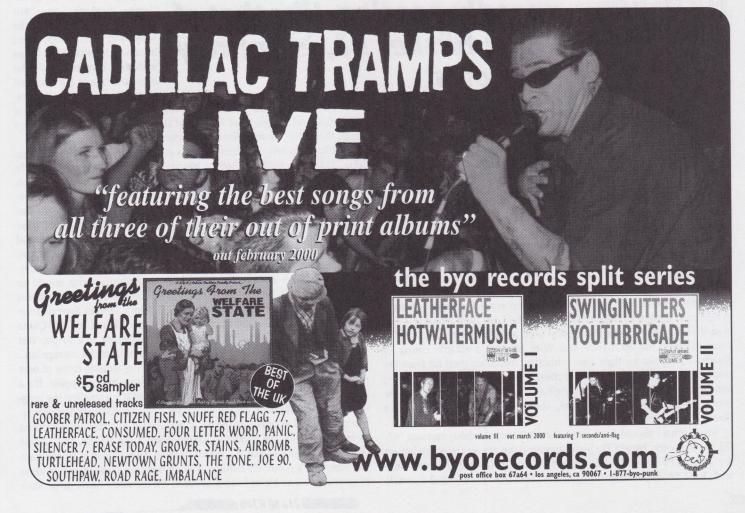
Many of the press's newer fixations (from the Bluetones to, more recently, Gay Dad) are young, cocksure, Sassy "cute band alert" types when it comes to lasting substance. Many bands who benefit from the UK media frenzy fit these increasingly narrowing, disturbing parameters, having been around for a terribly short while, trading in style, looks, flash, and attitude instead of actually developing music itself that could galvanize an epoch. Like 1992 Suede, only with far less going for them talent-wise, the pictures of these groups appear on the cover of both papers after only one proper single! Or less. When it happened to the Bluetones, for example, their second single, "Slight

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Return" went to #2 in the UK charts. The debut LP that followed, *Expecting to Fly*, went straight to #1. What were they, the bloody Beatles '96?

But not surprisingly, when the Bluetones LP was released here, it stiffed big time. And by the time their second LP appeared, it wasn't even issued here (and was met by yawns in their home country-I guess the plaything had lost its novelty!). Now, it seems, it is we Americans that more often approximate the ideal of judging groups on their music and not for their built-in hype, a complete reversal of the way things were when the Specials could wake up a whole country to dire economic reality in urban areas. This is an incredible notion, considering how rotten we still are at that!

The Bluetones are a fair litmus test in more ways than one. An actually decent pop group but far from a great one, with several weaknesses (like a bare handful of strong songs), they were half as worthy as the initial reaction to them and twice as good as their current status among the great hoards of has-beens. Almost all these bands the UK papers formerly touted became relegated two years later to "persona non grata" in this manner, even the genuinely good ones, punk, pop, post-punk, new wave, noise, garage, it doesn't matter. The press turns on them like leper child-molesters, or Kennedys gone bad, calling them "shit" in the column inches that once proclaimed their phenomenal genius, though often the group's music has not changed. In fact, with Gene, Sleeper, and the sadly now defunct powerhouse Compulsion (three worthwhile bands those mags touted and then dismissed), their music got better. As one English band member explained to me, when they were being romanced by the press, their every movement was recorded, breathlessly, as being of great impor-



tance: Spotted at a pub, drunk. Chatting with a girl in another band. Quoted on some social issue or another having nothing to do with their songs. "Mostly twaddle," to borrow his phrase. Not that long thereafter, when the bloom was off the rose, the same papers wouldn't even report that they had released a new LP!

Concurrently and not coincidentally, the anglophiles over here are following suit, like monkey see, monkey do. Struggling to keep up with the rapidly changing fashions, musical and appearance-wise, they now seem more desperate, more vicarious-livers, more serialmonogamists, more slavish to these now-contemptible bibles, and still worse, far less discerning than in the past. Now too much in love with all things British, almost pathetically so, they continually fail to see (at first) the mediocrity of the endless parade of such UK press-weaned nothings as Menswear, Shed Seven, and Marion, and OK but horribly

Leatherface

over-rated acts such as the Stereophonics, Three Colours the Manic Street Preachers, Gorkys EM, and Super Furry Animals-just the kind of bands that would have been ignored by these same anglophiles five years ago for being too "punk" or too "trad rock 'n' roll."

Just as troubling, the newest UK bands, both excellent and awful, are alarmingly plagiaristic. The press now has decided that that's some kind of virtue, out of some kind of misplaced nationalistic culture pride, so long as the text being ripped off is an

older British one. And the fans are not old enough to remember the two-to-three-decades-old LPs that are being plundered, so they swal-

their own.

You see it everywhere. The Bluetones sounded way too much like the Stone Roses, a band that only appeared 10 years ago! Now four LPs into their career, Suede have yet to stop shoplifting from their pal David Bowie's illustrious catalog, and now even have lost their songwriting touch (their new LP doesn't go very far). Oasis, much as I liked them (before their last LP, which flat out sucked, and pompously so), borrows riff after riff from the Beatles (primarily), the Small Faces, and T-Rex, and they've even been successfully sued by Stevie Wonder and the New Christy Minstrels. Two other groups were also flagged for such outright pilfery: The lawyers for the Rolling Stones garnished the considerable wages earned by Verve for their huge hit "Bittersweet Symphony," because it was based on a key, repeating sample from a symphonic version of Jaggar/Richards' "The Last Time"-frankly a bad idea if you want to keep the money (and artistic vision cred). In the same manner, the Stranglers and Wire secured a sizable chunk of Elastica's royalties for their own robberies, including their hit from the Budweiser commercial, "Connection," proving that re-recording instead of sampling is still not original work, even in the eyes of the courts. (And now a newer band, the Warm Jets, sound just like Elastica! Ay, Carumba!)

Many others should have sued. Could Dodgy slavishly recreate '67-'72 the Who any better? Do you suppose there are any grooves left on the Jam's LPs in 60 Foot Dolls' collection? Is George Harrison kula with Kula Shaker's ransacking of his '60s/'70s work? (Bad karma!)

And what, pray tell, can the still-living Scott Walker think of the Divine Comedy? Hell, now that Blur has exhausted cherry-picking from the catalogs of the Kinks and XTC, they've switched over to aping our own Pavement, who themselves borrowed a significant patch from the Fall!. And Fuse doesn't even reach beyond the last few years for looting, preferring to give us Radiohead-lite, right down to the singer's

In fact, heavyweights Radiohead and Catherine Wheel aside, even the inspired bands are treading on very old ground. The brilliant Gene heavily recalls the Smiths (without the more-depressed but equally witty singer I will otherwise defend forever); the wonderful Teenage Fan Club still feed at the Big Star trough; the fun Supergrass are burdened by Madness and Buzzcocks comparisons; Ash sure know their way around Nirvana and Dinosaur Jr.; and as I've said in this space before, Belle & Sebastian are fantastic, but they only seem completely novel to those who never bought any of 100 releases by the groups on Sarah Records. In fact, perhaps the greatest of all of them, the almighty powerhouse Leatherface, could teach courses in Ruts and Dag Nasty appreciation and

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thought of as forthright

scholars — even if their

ungodly passion, like that of

prime Hüsker Dü, is entirely

be thought of as forthright scholars-even if their ungodly passion, like that of prime Hüsker Dü, is entirely their

In contrast, the archetypal bands mentioned at the with their own style. And the older UK bands I mentioned all wrote powerful, deeply rel-

start of this piece esteemed to this day because they were so original and innovative. Even the Jam, who began their career advertising homage to Mod/Soul, ripping off the Who and the Kinks, soon became identifiable titans

evant lyrics on modern life. Even without being compared to the Gang of Four, et. al., what does Shed 7 ever say? Do Space's words have any more depth than (ulp) those of the Spice Girls?

In the meantime, UK veterans such as Catherine Wheel, Billy Bragg, XTC, Frank & Walters, Robyn Hitchcock, and Mojave 3 (formerly Slowdive) that make extraordinary, original music are scoffed at or quietly tolerated, and have to come here to make their bread, however meager. Similarly, the still-amazing New Model Army (their new, double-live LP is a stunner!) are like lepers, even in their home Bradford, and head East to Continental Europe to pack theaters there instead. Newer original artists without a foothold here or some other European/Far East haven, such as the sparkling Astrid (Williamson, formerly of the also underappreciated Goya Dress), the wonderful Muttonbirds (who moved to London after two LPs in their native New Zealand), the resplendent Moose, the glistening Trash Can Sinatras, the fiery, veteran Swervedriver (who only clean up in Australia), or the hot punk likes of Foil and China Drum, just seem to languish, discarded, like paupers sent to pop rest homes to live out the rest of their years out of sight from the average fan..

Thus, it's a case of too much, too soon for the endless crops of new pretenders, valuable or bankrupt, soon to dissipate and disappear. It's a disease over there of plague-like proportions, and it's strangling the longterm evolution of talent, drying up the seemingly endless UK wellspringone that existed even before the early '60s British Invasion, as evidenced by late '50s greats the Shadows, Johnny Kidd & the Pirates, and Lonnie Donnegan, right up until the recent present. The disease is so common and simple, it's positively baffling why no one over there in any position of power does one blessed thing about it. On the other hand, given such

complacency, perhaps they deserve the malady they are infected with: When groups are considered "washed up" and "old news" at precisely the juncture where they really start to get a handle on what it is they do, there is no incentive to progress and plenty of disincentive to even survive

There is potential in some young, "not-there" British bands, and I don't mean to be harshly dismissive. But one worries how they'll handle being too popular too fast. Without the writer-frenzy and resulting fan mania, which could be as short lived as Zachary Taylor's presidency, we could have let them develop a little more before such damaging, major scrutiny. For the Brit press to dub a decent, young band the second coming of Christ, Allah, Buddha, Sun Myung Moon, Jim Jones, L. Ron Hubbard, or that quacky Heaven's Gate guru before they've even made an LP is a standard that no one can live up to. And it makes cynics of otherwise faithful fans.

As for the second-rate groups that shamelessly offer a grossly inferior version of some pioneering band from the past and are now no more, well, good riddance to your bad rubbish.

But as for me, and those like me, we seek instead the solace of music by non-British folks who have flown through many hoops already, serious and committed artists with something to say who will say it no matter what tatters their career is in at any given step. A new LP by our own Guided By Voices, Sebadoh, Mark Eitzel, Bob Mould, East River Pipe, Bad Religion, Eric Matthews, Pernice Brothers, Jeremy Enigk, Wayne Kramer, Youth Brigade, Black Watch, Ron Sexsmith, Pegboy, Mike Ness, Tanya Donnely, Idaho, Rasputina, Descendents/All, the Fastbacks, the Lemonheads, Hang-Ups, D.O.A., Wheat, Ron Sexsmith, French, the Bomb (Pezzati of Naked Raygun's brand new band), Zumpano, Scenic, Sloan, the Wipers-or, from New Zealand, Australia, and France, Martin Phillipps/The Chills, Able Tasmans, Feverdream, Robert Forster, Grant

McLennan, Les Thugs, Glide, You Am I, and Ed Kuepper-comes with the satisfaction of hearing artists trying to make their own music. Why should that be so hard?!?

And it's a gratification that comes without the vague stench and stigma of having something barely formed shoved down your throat (at import prices, often as much as \$27 a CD!) by an hysterical, shrieking foreign press who have lost all credibility. Starstruck anglophiles will learn someday about the obstinate folly of shallow romance with foreign-ness. There are already signs of spreading disillusionment among the unquestioning faithful, even among those that are so in love with the accent they suspend their critical faculties so far as to lose them altogether (so badly, you see them in line at a Robbie Williams in-store appearance at frickin' Tower or HMV, programs and cameras in hand). Even they begin to realize that they're always-shifting allegiances reflect stubborn habit rather than real enthusiasm. And there's nothing more pathetic than to watch the most reverent and pious lose their religion, as the rose colored glasses are wiped off to reveal a bill of goods.

As a final comment, I don't mean to be Chicken Little West. There are some fine bands in every country if you can find them. And just like the last time England went to shit in the later 1980s, there are some interesting bands there doing good things, bravely, in a vacuum. I've heard some much newer bands like Velocette and

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the finally-peaking Shack that made me think, "Check back in a while, they're heading in the right direction." Back then it was the House of Love, Jesus & Mary Chain, and My Bloody Valentine, new groups percolating that would alter the coming early years as we knew them. Surely the early '90s' new generation like Swervedriver, the Mega City Four, Drive, Snuff, Ride, Lush, the Pale Saints, etc., were making guitar music as lasting and as mind-blowing as the American underground. It can change at any time.

But if it happens again, it will happen for just a short while unless the press comes back to their senses at least a little. More likely, whatever great scene that might emerge, like flowers that grow in the cracks of a city sidewalk, well... Just as the best acts of the early '90s had their umbilical guitar chords cut so prematurely and were left to forage for their survival, exposed to the cold glare of disinterest, and malnourished from withdrawn support, it too will be piledriven under like so much mulch. No one wants the revolution to come again more than I do, in the name of great records and great tours. Even with all they're doing wrong over there, there's no need to go all the way to the other side and turn anglophobe. It's just sad to see such a long-time power so beggarly now, and boasting as if they're in the penthouse instead. It's just as sad to see that no one is calling them on it, either at home or over here, where the bands still come to suck a little unquestioning, ever-welcoming American teat.

So for now, it seems as though there's no place like home, or anywhere else that doesn't include music publications sold by the pound and read by the pounded.

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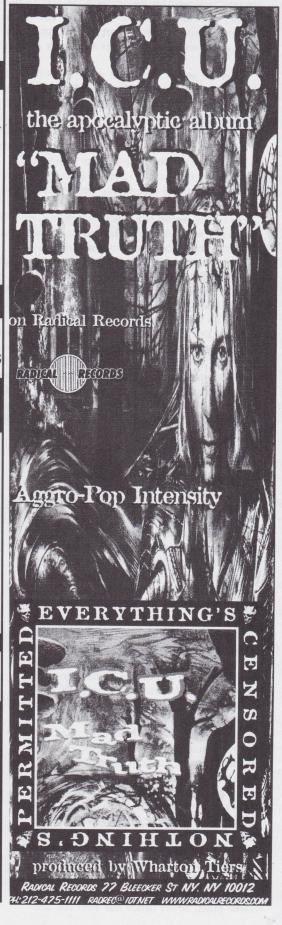
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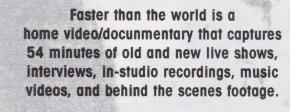
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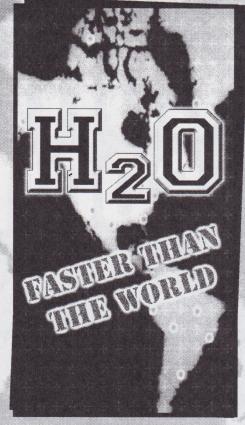


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YEAH...I HATE

ou're probably wondering how I could be so negative in this shitty day and age. But I'm sure if you're reading this magazine, you too have to hate something, if not everything.

One thing that's REALLY been irritating me of late are the shitloads of dogpiss remakes of once ultra-cool TV shows from the one and only golden era of television-the period before 1973. You may disagree with me that TV and most of the films made after '73 have been pretty much a worthless shower of shit...but they are. For that matter, if you really watch TV alot, you can notice the slide beginning around 1967. I'll admit that all the hippy-dippy garbage thrown into serious shows (i.e., FELONY SQUAD, JUDD FOR THE DEFENSE, MISSION IMPOSSIBLE, HAWAII 5-0) makes for good comedy at a beer-blast or a freak-out, but it sort of detracts from the cool edge that they originally had. Back to my point: I HATE fucking remakes. All these urine-stained dogs in Hollywood nowadays keep shitting out the worst crap. Don't get me wrong here-I haven't actually viewed any of these pathetic things. The fact is that I wouldn't waste my time on such junk. Let me give you a few for instances.

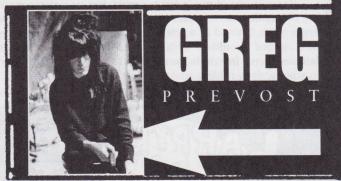
One is the "remake" of WILD WILD WEST. Now this is PURE FUCKING CRAP. Geek-o-rama, special effects out-the-ass, computer-generated stupidity, and of course there has to be a fucking love scene, as the media-manipulated morons have to include this in order to hold low-IQ attention spans. Robert Conrad, the icon of the original and only REAL WILD WILD WEST, could kick the shit out of this whole conglomeration of gimps. Oh, and don't forget that the soundtrack belongs in a cesspool as well. It's nothing more than that recycled

disco drivel that I fucking hated the first time around, but now they dress it up with drum machines and a heavier low end that probably gives the geeks that listen to it the runs. (That reminds me of something else I hate...all those wanna-beams with that big loud bass crap blasting out of their cars. Once I walked by a pond with lots of scum floating on top...in the midst of the scum, there were these huge bullfrogs making rubber band noises. That's what those boom box cars sound like, although I'd prefer to hear the scum-skimming frogs any day. But I'm getting away from the subject at hand, aren't I?)

Another pathetic remake was the film that they dared to call MIS-SION IMPOSSIBLE. First off they have some short guy, who has to stand on orange crates and encyclopedias in order to be as tall as the female co-stars, playing the part of Mr. Phelps. Peter Graves, the original MISSION IMPOSSIBLE hero, is the ONLY Mr. Phelps. Unlike the 90's dweeb who's supposed to be a tough guy, Peter Graves was 6 foot 5 and a real tough guy. If he kicked the shit out of someone, you'd have no problem believing it. Likewise this particular "remake" relies heavily on special effects, as do all current productions. I didn't see this film either, but the preview I saw on TV was pretty laughable.

They had some jerk hanging on the end of a subway car, doing the impossible, immersed in flames, the works. Of course if you played Donkey Kong, you could see the same sort of excitement when the sharks jump up and bite the monkey's ass. A thrill a minute.

THE SAINT was another piece of shit. ROGER MOORE IS THE SAINT. No one else. The soundtrack was supplied by some pseudo-disco shit unit-Twerp, or Twat, or Orb, or some such stupid name. It's what all these morons call "house music", whatever the fuck that is. I call it "OUTHOUSE music". The thing that strikes me as odd is that even the idiots that go to see this trash don't seem to like it much. Actually, they only like it for as long



as the media tells them to like it. Like everything in this day and age, it's utterly disposable-just like that pile of dogshit in the yard. Here today, gone tomorrow. Don't get me wrong, I'm not comparing these "great" Hollywood productions to dogshit-that would be an insult to the dogshit.

Unlike the 90's dweeb who's supposed to be a tough guy, Peter Graves was 6 foot 5 and a real tough guy. If he kicked the shit out of someone, you'd have no problem believing it.

I realize that I'm getting a bit negative and long-winded here, so I'll wrap things up. Before I do, though, I've heard frightening rumors that they are planning on "redoing" HAVE GUN WILL TRAV-EL. Now this would be a real sacrilege. Rumor also has it that fat-assed John Rivolta is going to be playing the part of Paladin. Yeah, you heard me right, the very same jerk that fanned the flames of disco music. The damned same square. Somehow all the fucking

retards in the media, as well as the media-manipulated public, seem to think that he's cool now. I know, it's hard to believe. Everything that was REALLY COOL in the mid-to-late 70s-the Ramones, the Sex Pistols, the whole 70's punk movement-was a direct backlash against all this swill. And that shitty version of GREASE only made things worse. Anyone who is into REAL ROCK 'N' ROLL has to fucking HATE this guy for glorifying and popularizing disco, not to mention the butt-ugly fashions associated with it. But now, all is apparently forgiven. They're even trying to cast him in a role that he couldn't possibly pull off. Richard Boone, who was the very definition of COOL, will turn over in his grave if John-Boy tries to revive his character!



Two thousand years
Two thousand years
Two thousand years
Of your god damned glory
- Jefferson Starship, c. 1971

don't usually stand around at bus stops humming Jefferson Starship songs - I'm not as much of a sad old hippie as some of you seem to think I am - but for some reason those words popped into my head while I was waiting for my friend Danny to turn up.

Danny's one of my favorite people, but he's also a walking contradiction. It makes him hard to figure out but fun to argue with. Trained as a scientist, a journalist by profession, he's rubbed shoulders with some of the richest and most famous people in Britain, but prefers to while away his hours in smoky, drug-ridden, underground dance clubs.

He earns enough to support himself from working a cou-



ple days a week. On top of that, he makes more money playing the stock market than most do by working. With a Ph.D. from one of England's better universities, an income and lifestyle that are decidedly middle class, and a future that promises more of the same, Danny could be a poster boy for capitalism and the British way of life.

But not if it were up to him. He hates the system, wants

to see it destroyed, and spends a good deal of his free time trying to do just that. He's not unaware of the contradictions, but he brushes them off as irrelevant. Talk about anything else and his mind is that of a scientist: demanding clear-cut evidence and rational deduction. Talk about politics, and his ultimate answer boils down to something like, "I know it doesn't make sense, but I believe it anyway."

I've known a lot of people like Danny. One of them was me. There was a time when I thought that the destruction of western civilization was the best thing that could happen. Of course I was only ten years old at the time, and I'd just discovered Gibbon's *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.

To my ill-tempered and anti-social mind, the barbarians who had overrun Rome seemed far more exciting than the boring old tribunes and senators and legions who were trying to maintain it. I was 20 years early, but right in tune with the "No Future" and "Destroy Society" brigades that would rise out of the punk scene.

And I wasn't in any hurry to outgrow my youthful nihilism: through the 60s and into the 70s I would turn up for any demonstration, or, preferably, riot. It didn't matter what the cause was; I just wanted to see things destroyed. The summer I was 19 I was in the middle of the Detroit riots, the most violent and deadly civil disorder in American history, at least until the Rodney King riots in LA. It was a mostly mindless orgy of looting, burning, and killing, but I thought it was great: a sure sign that America was doomed.

Why was I so enthusiastic about destroying my own country? OK, I wasn't part of the privileged classes, and if I'd followed the normal course of kids from my neighborhood, I would have found myself in a dead-end job at one of the auto factories, but at the same time, I was still better off than about 90% of the world's population.

What's more, I had many opportunities - most of which I ignored or flubbed badly - to create a better life for myself. If I'd bothered to study, if I'd managed to stay out of trouble with the law, if I'd had an even slightly constructive attitude toward myself and the world, I could have won a scholarship to a good university and wound up in the professional classes.

But because America didn't give me everything I wanted on demand, I decided the whole system was rotten to the core, and didn't deserve to exist. I carried on like that well into mid-life, when it finally began to sink in that while America was a terrible place in many ways, it was also a lot better than almost every other place.

There were certain aspects of life in Canada or Britain or Western Europe that I preferred - the relative scarcity of gun-toting psychopaths, for example, and a more caring social system. But while there are significant differences between Germany and England and the USA and tiny, wonderful Iceland, they're all

united by certain common values that we can call western civilization. And while it's riddled with faults and always ripe for reform, it's also absolutely brilliant, a monument to the ability of humankind to constantly reinvent and transcend itself.

That's not a popular view, especially among readers of magazines like this one. But I've never been inclined to espouse popular views for the sake of being popular. "An unexamined life is not worth liv-

ing," said Socrates, as he was laying the groundwork for western civilization, and he was exactly right. It's that notion, that we constantly need to challenge and revise conventional wisdom, that has enabled western civilization to prosper, not just materially, but morally and ethically and spiritually, beyond all others.

Because America didn't give me everything I wanted on demand, I decided the whole system was rotten to the core, and didn't deserve to exist.

Yes, you can rightly say, the West grew rich from slavery and imperialism and colonialism and exploitation and a ruthless disregard for the planet. But it was also the West which was able to question itself, to change its values, to abolish slavery, to give up its colonies, to extend freedom of movement and choice to its poorest and most benighted and oppressed people.

The West invented democracy, and put forth the principle that all citizens should have a voice and a vote in deciding how society should be ordered. In early days, only a handful of wealthy property owners could participate in this so-called rule of the people, but over time that right has been extended again and again, until today we have a society in which all people, regardless of their gender or race or ethnicity or wealth, have the opportunity to participate.

Put simply, that hasn't happened anywhere else. Other cultures preceded us; while we were still living in caves, Asia and Africa and the Middle East had already developed advanced civilizations and technologies. But they stopped - in many cases, went backward - while the West took their inventions and discoveries and philosophies and made them into something far greater than their progeni-

tors had ever imagined. There's a reason for this, and it doesn't have anything to do with racism or imperialism or any of the West. It comes down to ment to the rights of the was the most modern country on earth; a thousand years later, it's frantically trying to catch up, some people would have you believe, the West stole everything of value from China, but because China was an autocracy, a technologically advanced but socially backward society where the vast majority of citizens were illiterate serfs

I'll admit, I had mixed the villains commonly feelings when I saw them democracy, and its committed taking out a Starbucks. I individual. At the dawn of the last millennium, China hate Starbucks, even more than I hate McDonald's. To and why? Not because, as me, it typifies the most tasteless excesses modern consumer society.

with no prospect of ever becoming anything else.

Not only were Chinese peasants denied the right to education, they were denied the opportunity to profit from their own vision or imagination. The Chinese invented things like printing and gunpowder and the clock, but it was the West who put them to use. Why? Because Europeans, and later Americans, cultivated a sense of individual enterprise and independence that was feared and suppressed in China and other older societies.

China is coming to life today, as Japan did in the last century, and how? By emulating Western ways. The countries that are still failing, in the sense that they can't feed their own people or guarantee their basic safety, are those which still refuse to learn the lessons of history, that still treat their people as resources and

You'll note that these are the sort of charges commonly leveled at America and the West, that our society is organized solely around profit, that individuals are treated as little more than spare

LARRYLIVERMORE

parts for the machine. There's a certain truth to that, of course, but it ignores the larger truth: that Westerners on average live healthier, wealthier, longer, more fulfilling lives than the members of any other society on earth. For every African-American who's living in poverty, you can point to a thousand Africans who would think they had died and gone to heaven if they could change places with him. For every underpaid, overworked American factory worker, there are a thousand desperate Mexicans risking their lives to get across the border and take his place.

If you agree that we're relatively better off - and it would be hard not to - you might argue that we're only doing well at the expense of the less fortunate peoples of the world. But even if you wholeheartedly embrace that view, you only have two choices. You can figure out how to make the benefits of democracy and individual enterprise more widely available, or you can destroy democracy and individual enterprise and hope that whatever

> replaces them will somehow be better.

You can argue, as many of my friends do, that "democracy" is a fraud and that western civilization is so hopelessly corrupt that it is beyond reform. At that point, you might even don a black mask and balaclava and set out on your own demolition derby, like the kids in Seattle last month, who took it upon themselves to smash the windows of any institution that deemed excessively capitalist.

I'll admit, I had mixed feelings when I saw them taking out a Starbucks. hate Starbucks, even more than I hate McDonald's. To me, it typifies the most tasteless excesses of modern

consumer society. But does that give me the right to smash their windows or burn their shop? If so, don't Starbucks lovers - and there are obviously many - have the same right to come to my neighborhood and smash up the vegetarian co-op or the anarchist info shop?

I put a similar question to my friend Sean: "What's the difference between a gang of left-wing thugs trashing a McDonald's and a gang of right-wing thugs attacking a Jewish synagogue?"

He's usually good with a punch line, but all he could come up with, "Well, one's right and one's wrong."

But who decides? Is it simply a matter of who's got the biggest and best-armed gang? Well, if that's the case, then it must be the police who are always right, and of course no one believes that.

There is one sense, though, in which the police have a greater claim to being right, and that is because they are accountable - at least in the West - to a civil, elected government, so at least in theory they are doing the will of the majority. If a bunch of young

anarchists or a bunch of young Nazis decide to do their own version of social or ethnic cleansing, who are they accountable to?

More and more I become convinced that there's hardly a dime's worth of difference among anarchists and communists and fascists. They're all profoundly anti-democratic, they all believe that they have the right to impose their views on others, by force if necessary, and they all seek chaos and the breakdown of civil society because they see it as their most likely route to power.

What they have in common most of all is a contempt for civilization and civility. Read some Nazi tracts from the 1920s and 1930s, and then compare them to some modern anarchist theory, especially that of the class war and deep ecology ilk. The two sides might differ in their long-range views of how a new society should be constructed, but they're almost identical in their short-term views of how and why the old one should be destroyed.

So why is it that so many bright and idealistic young people have at least some sympathy for this view? Is it just a matter of youthful rebellion, the societal equivalent of hating your parents because you know you're dependent on them? Or is it a deeper malaise, a collective crisis of self-confidence, that's caused many of us to turn our backs on what our ancestors spent the last several thousand years creating?

To me, it's both hopeful and frightening. Hopeful because the desire to challenge existing paradigms is one of the fundamental things that made the West great in the first place. Frightening because if too many people lose faith, if they begin to feel that only the most desperate and extreme measures have any value, we could lose it all.

I'm older than most *Hit List* readers. Barring huge breakthroughs in medical science (oops, another Western accomplishment), I'll have long been in my grave while some of you are preparing to celebrate the dawn of the 22nd century. You've got to live a lot longer than I do with what you create - or destroy.

Unlike many older people, I don't claim to know all the answers. I'm not sure I know any of them. Any advice I give to the young is probably going to be sneered at, and perhaps that's the way it should be.

But I'm going to try anyway. With all my heart I believe that if you're alive today - at any age, but especially if you're young - you have one of the greatest opportunities in history to shape the future of this world, to decide whether it's going to continue to grow and learn from its mistakes, or whether it's going to all come crashing down from lack of faith or lack of interest.

Not only did your ancestors bequeath to you the technology the trains and planes and automobiles, the radio and video and internet - that give you power unimagined by even the richest and most elite a century ago, they also gave you the ideas, the dreams, and the passions that drive you on, that tell you we can always be a better and a brighter and a more just and caring people.

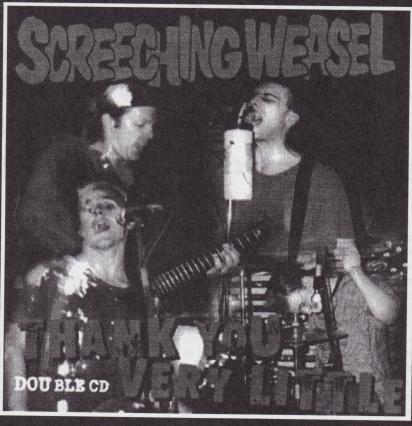
You can go with that legacy, reform it, build upon it and spread its benefits to more and more people, or you can say fuck it, let's tear it all down and see what grows up in its place. It's your choice. For your own sake, and that of your children and their children's children, don't blow it. History is not known for giving second chances.



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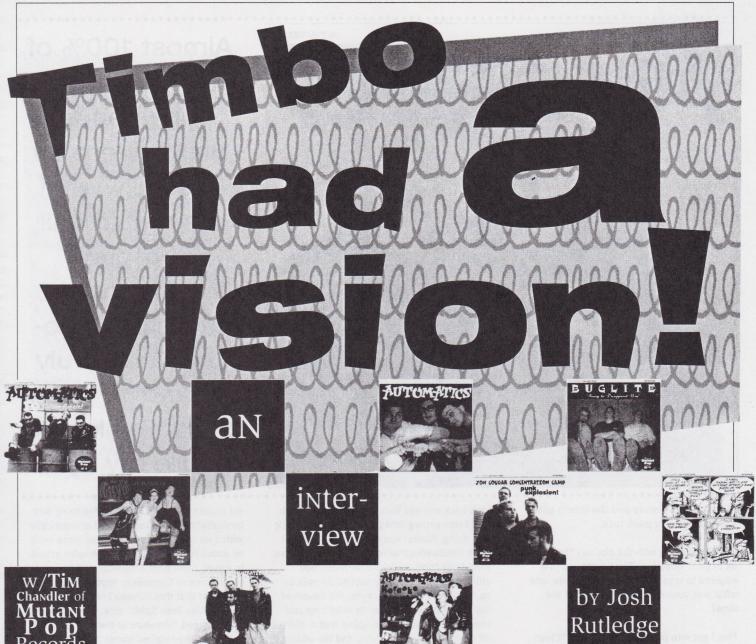
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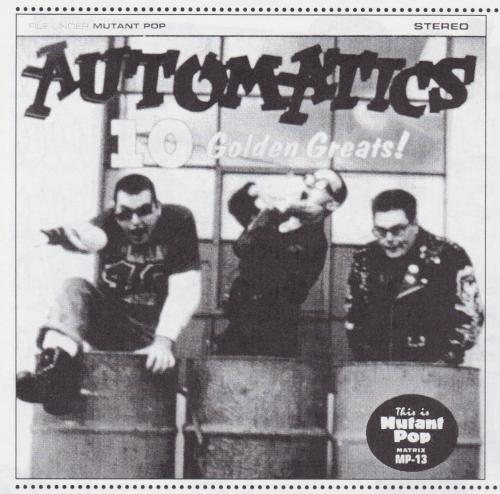


riting about Mutant Pop Records has truly been a pleasurable endeavor for me over the past four years. The label's emergence in 1995 thrilled me to death at a time when I really NEEDED rock music to blast me with a serious jolt of exhilaration. Tim's passion for punk rock, dedication to underground ideals, and fine taste in music drove me to a fanaticism that time has been unable to erode. Mutant Pop has been my favorite punk label since the moment I first heard the Automatics' "All The Kids Just Wanna Dance" EP four autumns ago. "All my bands rock," said the note on the envelope of the

first Mutant Pop parcel to ever hit my mailbox. Tim believed it then, and he certainly believes it now. He does not milk trends or ride fads. He simply stays true to the music that moves and excites him.

While it was certainly Lookout!! Records that introduced pop-influenced punk rock to the masses in the early 90's, Mutant Pop was the label that sustained that particular "sound" at the grass roots level. A cursory glance at the label's back catalog reads like a veritable "Who's Who" of 90's pop-punk (the Automatics, Boris the Sprinkler, the Connie Dungs, Moral Crux, Sicko, etc.) and underground pop (the Kung Fu Monkeys, the Hissyfits, the Chubbies, Dirt Bike Annie, etc.) musical forces. Skeptics may dismiss

the "Mutant Pop sound" as a candy-coated, watered-down mutation of "original" punk rock, but history doesn't support such a position. Was "pop-punk" an ephemeral trend brought on by the success of Green Day? Or is it still an important punk rock sub-genre with an enduring appeal? The latter stance seems to prevail. Five years after its initial emergence, Mutant Pop Records has proven the cynics wrong by continuing to release vital and exciting underground pop records. As the label prepares to celebrate its fifth birthday, it seems appropriate to look back at a half-decade of excellence and look forward to a still-gleaming future. This past November, Tim and I discussed both



Almost 100% of the cool original punk bands-which were all basically what we would call "pop-punk" bands today-had either broken up or truly sucked by 1984 or so. Punk died before my eyes.

Mutant Pop's history and the label's place in contemporary punk rock.

Josh: Let's begin with the obvious "how did it all begin?" question. When were you first inspired to create Mutant Pop Records, and what was your vision for the label at the time?

Tim: I got into punk rock during the "Clash Mania" period. At the end of 1979 And into 1980, the Clash started to get "hot" with coverage in Rolling Stone and such. Previous to that I had been aware of the existence of punk rock but had never really had the time, ability, or motivation to investigate it. Prior to the Clash breaking through, punk rock in the United States was strictly an urban thing. All that changed in 1979-80. After I saw my first punk show in 1981, X with Romeo Void, I became a pretty fanatical convert to the New Wave. I sold off a major part of my '70's rock cassette collection (in those days it was a choice between cassettes and LPs) and started picking up anything that had a band with short hair on the cover. I was totally sold on the notion that "Rock" was one beast and that "New Wave" was a completely different animal. I still believe this is true. Of course now, with the benefit of hindsight, we can

look back and say with a fair degree of truth that I was getting into punk just as the music was dying. Almost 100% of the cool original punk bands-which were all basically what we would call "pop-punk" bands today-had either broken up or truly sucked by 1984 or so. Punk died before my eyes, the flavors of the day were transformed to utter crap and supplanted by vomit-like speed metal, shirtsoff macho hardcore bullshit, and the utterly horrible art-wank that was being put out on Alternative Tentacles. Poppy punk rock was a dead genre for the antique shops, I figured, and I spent most of the next ten years living in the past by chasing down old Britpunk records or listening to post-punk pop offshoots like XTC and the Police. The good bands I "found" during the 1980s, bands like Husker Du and the Pixies, were few and far between. If you want to understand why I started Mutant Pop, you have to understand this mentality. Punk had died and then, miracle of miracles, it came back from the gravebigger and stronger and better than ever! What a thrilling notion! I was living in Seattle in 1989, going to grad school for a year in the field of Russian Area Studies (en route to a planned Ph.D. in history) when the "grunge" thing was starting to perk hard. But the Seattle grunge scene didn't make the slightest impact upon me. The Sub Pop thing was basically '70's hard rock played energetically with a lot of distortion; I was way more excited about finding the Pixies, who were actually a punk band from a musical standpoint. I came home to Corvallis in 1990 and it wasn't long after that that Nirvana broke big with the "Smells Like Teen Spirit" video and the world was changed. Somehow in the process of all these Nirvana-inspired bands being formed, there was a leap to the past; punk rock had returned! When I figured out that punk was happening all around me, it proved to be totally energizing. Along with two students at Oregon State University, I started a local music fanzine called ZINE to help solidify the local music scene. Good poppy punk records started to be made by little labels, and I heard a few of those as review copies sent to ZINE. I learned about Lookout! Records at this time, and they were really at the top of their game, releasing some really great stuff in 1993 and 1994. I got thinking a little bit about doing a label, but wasn't terribly serious or driven about that. That was something that other people did-put out records. My mission was different, I thought.

J: So at what point did you decide that YOUR mission might involve a label?

T: Our local all ages venue closed in 1993, and over '93-94, I promoted a half dozen shows or so. That's how I met a few bands and started to find out about the burgeoning underground pop-punk scene centered around Lookout! Records. One of the bands that played in a show I promoted-a group from Eureka, California called Underhandreally made a big impact on me. I was given a freshly-recorded demo tape, and I immediately believed in the quality and artistry of that band. I tried to get Lookout! interested, but they seemingly didn't care. It was my first disorientation, this discovery that the 800 pound gorilla of the pop-punk world, Lookout! Records, really wasn't scouting young poppunk bands. That just didn't seem right. So I decided to take the plunge and start a label, to put out Underhand and other cool bands. I initially wanted to be a little Lookout! Records for the Pacific Northwest-giving poppy punk bands an honest and focused label committed to the type of sounds that they were making. A cynical observer not understanding where I was coming from mentally might have seen MP as trend-hopping in 1995. Pop-punk was at its zenith, after all, and Lookout! Records was starting to sell tonnage. But that wasn't my mentality at all. It wasn't about all the units that Lookout! was shifting-it was all

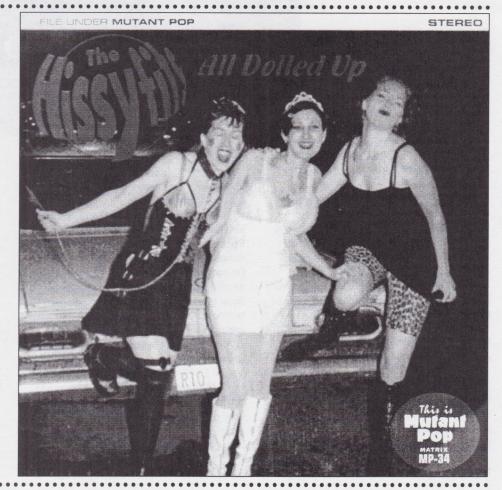
about "The Lookout!! Sound." I saw 1990's American pop-punk as the rebirth of 1977style Britpunk in a different time and place, and was 100% dedicated to the goal of helping bands that really believed in that sound to make good recordings and to get those good recordings into good packages and into the hands of fans who cared. That sounds cheesy, but it's totally true. I hoped my label would grow and prosper, to be sure, but I wanted to do things ethically and in a bandfriendly way. I saw Mutant Pop as akin to a AAA baseball farm team, with Lookout! as the major league club, and wanted to help scout out new bands and help them get to the next level, which would in turn inspire other bands to form and develop. Thus the music would not die out but would thrive and expand. Unfortunately, by early 1996 I had figured out that the Pacific Northwest was an exceptionally bad pop-punk scene and that Lookout! Records themselves didn't believe in "The Lookout!! Sound." I understood that I needed to look towards building a national pop-punk label. My theory is this: there are three kids in every town who are really into poppy punk rock. There aren't nearly enough towns in the Northwest to support a label, but if you can get those three kids from EVERY TOWN IN AMERICA together, all of the sudden you

have critical mass for a grassroots-oriented label to exist.

J: Lookout! Records was certainly an impetus as far as the underground pop-punk revival was concerned. But they had clearly moved away from that particular sub-genre by the time your label took off. What were your thoughts on Lookout! at the time? What happened to their little pop-punk empire?

T: I was really bitter about Lookout!'s apparent desertion of the pop-punk movement for a long time. My third single was Boris the Sprinkler's "Drugs and Masturbation" EP, and that really exploded out the chute. I pressed 1600 records of that thing to start, and in about 2 weeks they were totally gone. I mean, that band ROCKED and they were commercially HOT. I did wholesale and I can't begin to tell you how hot they were at that time. I sent Chris from Lookout! an e-mail detailing sales figures and tipping him that Nørb and the goofs had just recorded a second full-length and that Lookout! could land that release with a quick phone call and a click of the fingers. This was totally true. Chris replied to the effect of "Who's Boris the Sprinkler?" and said, and I quote, "You run your label and I'll run mine." I mean, Jesus

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turn inspire other
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and develop.



fucking Christ, Nørb was an MRR columnist in a pop-punk band with one album already out, and they were the hottest thing since sliced bread in the Midwest-and this new Lookout! honcho didn't even know WHO they were; he even resented the fact that someone would try and drop a cheaply recorded potential mega-seller in his fucking lap! That burned me.

These art-fags were cashing big checks from Green Day albums and walking away from seminal pop-punk bands like the Invalids, and were investing the proceeds in Worst Case Scenario singles and putting out second tier dogshit like Pansy Division and Couch. It was really a rude awak-

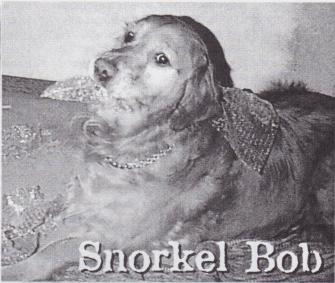
ing to fill what I perceived as a void in the area of scouting and development of young pop-punk bands-an unofficial A&R type set-up that would jump bands to Lookout!-that would have been ideal. But then I figured out that I was an AAA farm team with no major league affiliate, and secondly, I really began to understand the way the music industry really works and to despise that.

The bottom line is this: you just can't be a virtuous prostitute; it's not possible. The record industry is corrupt and evil, so the true path of the committed punk label mustn't be to attempt to behave ethically in this unethical world-it must be to create an alternative

house or the McDonalds, the mom 'n' pop record shop or Camelot Music. As soon as you try and function within the world of the homogeneous conglomerates, you have lost the game. They will fuck you, and they will kill you-because you are little and they are big. The only hope for your life and your soul is to live and operate in the little world.

So what is Mutant Pop doing that others are not? I have my peers: Pelado Records, Just Add Water Records-both very different from me in terms of "label sound", but similarly independent and underground. I feel a kinship with Melted Records because those guys truly believe in The Pop, although their

ideology is corporate. I feel a kinship



Official Pet of Mutant Pop Records

ening that this whole "Lookout! Sound" wasn't even understood at Lookout!. Those people were not and are not pop-punk fans, as far as I'm concerned. Every once in a while they release a good album by accident. If you take a careful look at the stuff they release, you will realize that this is true. Ben Weasel, now that guy believes in pop-punk. He may not be totally versed about who's who in the deep underground, and he and I may not be on the same page philosophically, but Ben knows his shit about the Pop and he, generally speaking, doesn't make a lot of mistakes with the bands he puts out on his label, Panic Button. But Lookout! is a totally lost cause in terms of pop-punk. They've got remnants of an established stable of artists from 1993, and God bless their health, because they've got nobody in reserve!

J: How has your label's vision evolved over the years? Have you had to adapt to "the industry" in order to survive? Do you have peers in the underground now that are filling the same kind of void that you fill?

T: When I started Mutant Pop, I was attempt-

ethical uni-

verse. It took me five years to come to this state of enlightenment, and trust me, Grasshopper, I know The Way. The field is strewn with with the bones of the labels that tried and failed to dance with the great whore, The Record Industry. The distributors and record chains have consumed them. It's like partying with vampires, you've gotta either become one of them or you're toast. I'm not going to do that, and one goal of the second half of my life as a label will be to show others how to make use of emerging technologies in building a rock and roll underground in opposition to The Industry.

Bear in mind, I'm one of those who has come to punk rock through radical politics. I was an ENORMOUS Gang of Four fan; the name "Mutant Pop" was nicked from a 1980 compilation album that Gang of Four's first label put out. I may not believe in socialism any more, but I do believe in punk rock as a social movement and in DIY as a philosophy and a way of life. There are two paths in life: the little shop or the chain store, the tea-

with TKO Records, as well as for their commitment to a sound and their dedication to quality. Long Gone John from Sympathy may put out some stuff that I can't appreciate, but he's put out a ton of killer stuff as well, and he has never chased dollar signs. Ten years and HUN-

DREDS of releases. A real inspiration! John Yates from Allied-what a person. One hundred releases he believed in personally and a curtain call-fucking great! Yeah, there are other labels out there doing what I'm doing. They're just doing it differently because they have their own voices in their heads. Those are the sorts of people next to which I want to have my name mentioned.

J: What's your opinion on the degree of endurance of the "Mutant Pop sound"? A few years ago, a cynic could have said that your "sound" was just a trend. But it's obviously no longer a "hot" sound, and you're still selling records. Will pop-punk "be around" for a while?

T: Pop-punk was not something that magically sprung up from thin air in 1994 because the record corporations needed a fresh flavor of

the month for clueless mall kids. In a very real sense, pop-punk is THE original form of punk rock. Let's take a trip in the Way Back Machine to 1977: the Clash, the Dickies, the Buzzcocks, the Ramones, the Vibrators, the Rich Kids, the Only Ones, the Sex Pistols, SLF, the Jam, Devo, Generation X, Chelsea, the Weirdos, the Damned, blah blah fucking blah blah blah. If these bands were making the same records today, they could all properly be called "pop-punk". Until hardcore came around and polluted the planet with its louder-faster-dumber testosterone-laden shirts-off macho bullshit, all punk was pop!. It was mutant pop, just hard, fucking gritty, abrasive, punchy pop music. As I said, I actually copped the name for my label from a 1980 English punk rock compilation album. I love the term; it's a perfect description of true original punk music. Mutant Pop is a true roots punk label every bit as much as the grittier "street" '77-sound labels like Pelado Records and TKO Records.

Indeed, if I wasn't doing the sound that I'm doing on Mutant Pop-basically tracing sonic roots back to the Ramones, the Buzzcocks, and the Dickies-I'd probably be putting out records from the Clash and SLF food group, because that's also part of the music that I cut my teeth on. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, it was all just "punk"; this division of Ramonesy bands into one camp and Clashy bands into another is a recent innovation. The bands that sound like NOFX have nothing fucking whatsoever to do with '77-sound music, incidentally. I pay attention to all varieties of '77-derived music in my mail order catalog, whether the band owes its basic inspiration to the Ramones or the Clash. The SoCal kids can go get ripped off at the mall. When you look at the history of punk like that, you see how absurd it is to ask whether pop-punk is a trend. Pop-punk is original '77vintage punk music reborn in a different time and place.

Now this is important: the reason I am doing the children of Screeching Weasel and grandchildren of the Ramones rather than California boys doing updates of '77 Britpunk is that the former, in my opinion, is AN AUTHENTIC, GRASS-ROOTS MUSICAL MOVE-MENT. It appeals to me not only musically, but as a historian. The sound these bands create may not be aggressive enough for your discerning taste. Whatever. You may think that many of the bands lack originality. Whatever. But the basic fact remains: Lookout! Records, Green Day, Screeching Weasel, the Queers-all these bands, that scene, that sound-started an underground international musical movement that is just as valid and vital as streetpunk or grind or emo or any other subgenre. I am out to propagate and document that musical movement.

And I'm not in the mood to take any shit from sanctimonious, pretentious, pierced hipsters about whether the music I put out and sell is "punk" enough for them: it's fucking punk rock (noun), unless you care to falsify history. No, the MP sound is NOT commercially hot. Quite frankly, I am very happy that the MP sound is not commercially in demand. The multinational entertainment conglomerates and the careerists who chase them are down the road, and the people that remain in the pop-punk scene honestly BELIEVE in the music. When MP started, there was this little frenzy of bands trying to be the next Green Day. That's gone now. People are just writing songs because the voices in their heads tell them to, and that's really what it's all about.

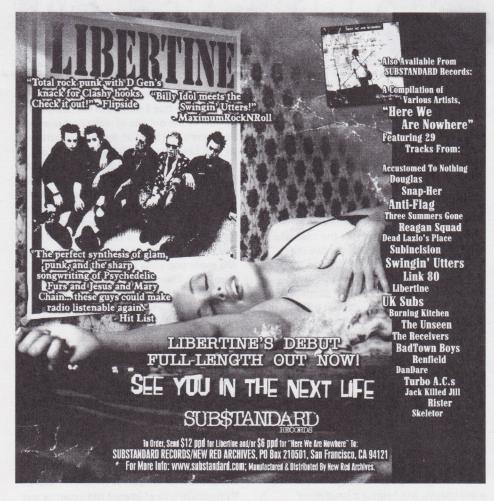
J: Pop-punk is certainly nothing new if you go back to the Ramones, the Dickies, the Boys, etc., and trace the subgenre to those bands' early days. Yet we could generally agree that the 80's and very early 90's represented a very dark period for underground pop. Why was that the case, and what force brought poppy punk back?

T: I honestly have no idea why punk rock came back from the grave. The hardcore dicks

pretty much killed it deader than a doornail. By the time bonehead pricks like the Exploited released "Punk's Not Dead," it pretty much WAS dead. Then for some reason it re-emerged from the grave in the very last years of the 1980s. Kudos to bands like the Parasites, the Vindictives, the Mr. T Experience. I don't understand how or why, but it did come back.

J: I know you are very interested in using your label to document a "scene" in the same way that a label like Dangerhouse did for early American punk rock. The fact that many zines already refer to the "Mutant Pop sound" indicates that you've been successful in that respect. But how do you expect music fans to view your label in 20 years or so? Will 90's pop-punk be respected in the future?

T: I really salute John Yates from Allied for running a label the way he wanted to run it, with few compromises, and then folding the tent when he rolled the odometer. I've already decided that when I get to 100 EPs, I will never make another-although the jury is still out whether I'll continue to crank out CDs. I guess that depends on whether it's still fun-this is just a really cool, really expensive





Anyway, if I'm remembered for nothing else, I want to be remembered for a really cool series of 7" records — and I hope people pay lots of money for them on eBay, because that would be very flattering indeed!

hobby to me. Twenty years from now, I would like to think that the late Mutant Pop will be remembered for having put out a series of really cool singles, the first pressings of which remain in demand. I'd like to think people will still be spinning vinyl in 2020. Shit, think about this: if I get to 100 EPs at an average cost of \$1500 per (the average is actually somewhat higher than that!), MP will have dumped \$150,000 into an "obsolete" format. I mean, obviously the fans are the ones who ultimately cough up the chips to buy the records and pay the bills, but that's a pretty enormous commitment by any standard. Labels like TKO and Pelado that continue with the format in increasingly difficult times have my greatest respect.

Anyway, if I'm remembered for nothing else, I want to be remembered for a really cool series of 7" records-and I hope people pay lots of money for them on eBay, because that would be very flattering indeed! The second thing for which I want to be remembered is for providing a conduit for hundreds of likeminded bands to get their music to thousands of like-minded fans. There is something really satisfying from a creative standpoint about recognizing a great songwriter, writing a few checks, and helping a band make

something that is really cool, appreciated, and loved by true believers in the pop-punk genre. I've put out lots of really cool releases and there's one band on the label in particular that I am convinced will go down as one of the seminal bands of our time from an artistic standpoint. Just being close to brilliance and helping inspired and creative people make it happen are very satisfying, and if my label is someday regarded as a trademark of quality for a certain sound in a certain time in a certain place, there could be no greater honor. Will 1990s pop-punk be respected? Absolutely. There's a certain critical mass that has developed that makes it highly likely that punk will not decline to zero. The musical talent of every decade is respected by those who travel the same road later.

J: Your interest in music history has inspired you to take on a fairly ambitious punk history project. Please discuss the project and explain what it will entail-and what you hope to achieve.

T: I'm very definitely a historian at heart; I did a year of grad school and was intent on doing four or five more en route to a Ph.D. in History. My particular area of interest and expertise was

the social history of the early Soviet period-I'm very much into the way people lived their daily lives and interacted with other people, the emerging forms of mass media and popular culture of their times, the way individuals related to their jobs, and so on. It's not that great a leap to start looking at the punk rock world of the United States in the 1990's from the point of view of a social historian. There has been an absolutely MASSIVE landslide of records, CDs, and publications that have been created by a vital underground social and cultural movement, and a lot of this stuff is going to be lost to future generations without people stepping in and building archives of recordings and publications and attempting to systematize and make sense of the gargantuan outpouring of sounds and words. That's the bottom line here. My Punk Rock History Project is in early stages of preparation. Basically, I am going to attempt to do two things: to list and photograph the recordings of one partial section of the North American punk rock underground (the niche running sonically from the Kung Fu Monkeys to Submachine, if that makes any sense to you); and to gather fanzines and other documents of historical interest and to distill some sort of collection of key documents from that. I look forward to working with dozens of volunteer

researchers on this project, which won't really kick off for another year or so and should take several years of hard work to finish. The final database of recordings, accumulation of photos, and collection of key documents will then be published as a low cost DVD, a format which should be easily useable by the great majority of music fans and students of popular culture. There are certain exciting possibilities inherent in this means of publication as well-one can include sound clips and hyperlink between "pages" much like a vast web site, for example. It should be extremely cool, if I can pull it off, and along with the stuff I have managed to document on MP, it should prove to be a major part of my life's work.

J: Overall, what are you thoughts on the historical importance of 90's rock? Every decade will be remembered for SOMETHING, so what will we all remember about music in this past decade?

T: The 1990's saw a return of rock and roll to its primal roots and a fracturing of the cultural hegemony of the entertainment oligopoly.

Basically, punk came back from the grave while the production of recorded music has become increasingly decentralized and less subject to the whims of a handful of money-grubbing suits in LA and NYC. This is very positive. And just wait until the next decade, when CD-R technology, internet marketing, and ever lower recording costs are going to continue the trend of decentralization further.

J: Are you planning to completely fold the label after 100 singles? Was that part of the plan from the beginning: to put out a finite amount of records and then move on?

T: My goal from Day One has been to create a series of 100 singles that document a sound for a national scene and provide a collecting challenge for music fans in the future. Once I flip the odometer on the singles, I may or may not continue to make CDs-I suppose that will be a question of whether I still feel like I am serving a useful function for the pop-punk community-but I will definitely stop making 7" vinyl. 100 high quality singles and out-that's the game plan. In all likelihood, I will fold the label at the same time and move on with my life. But it's hard to think that far in advance-I'm just hitting the 40 single mark now, and I've been doing Mutant Pop for nearly five years.

J: So where is the underground rock community headed? How successful can a label of your size be in the coming years?

T: I see an increasing gap between the "haves" and the "have nots" in the underground world. On the one hand, you have the

labels like Epitaph, Fat, Lookout!, Go Kart, Hopeless, and such that play the mass marketing game with some degree of success and who will continue to exist on a fairly solid financial foundation-albeit by selling a largely homogenized product to a mainstream market via mainstream, corporate distribution channels. My friend Andre Prochaska calls such record makers "minor labels"-not exactly major labels per se, but playing the same game as the majors with varying degrees of success. The "have nots"-among whom I definitely include Mutant Pop-basically do not have access to mainstream distribution and retailing channels or a willingness to play the music industry mass marketing game. These "underground labels" are gonna have to network amongst themselves, trade stuff with one another, and make stuff go away to fans directly, without using big distributors and mall record stores. They're gonna continue to have a tough go of it as the punk rock world continues to contract over the next couple years. Underground labels can definitely survive in the coming years, but it's going to take creativity and a willingness to adapt to changing conditions-in addition to a lot of good old-fashioned hard work. The body count will be high-let there be no mistake-but the underground is vast and new people, with their earnest enthusiasm, keep coming into the field to replenish the decimated ranks. The best and the brightest and the luckiest and the most pig-headedly persistent underground labels will survive, no matter what the Flavor of the Day kids are buying.

J: All small labels seem to have one major problem in common: distributors who don't pay. How are all of these distributors able to function if they swindle so many labels? Who is supporting them?

T: I have a unique perspective on wholesale distribution, since I did it for three years as 1000 Flowers before finally putting it to sleep. I understand the struggle of dealing with distributors as a label and the struggles of being a distributor as well. Record distribution is all about the distributor's customer base and cash flow. Unlike most industries, in the music industry the manufacturer (label) is perceived to be responsible for the success of its manufactured goods at retail. If something gets placed in Junior Fatso's Wannabeabigguy Record Store and it doesn't sell, Junior Fatso wants to return it to the distributor and then the distributor wants to return it to the label. who gets a busted-up piece of stickered and shopworn returned shit instead of a check. I wish the shoe industry worked like that; I'd be a millionaire! In practice, it's a really bogus system skewed in favor of the retailer at the expense of the manufacturer, with the distrib-

utor in the middle stuffing his pockets. Alternatively, Junior Fatso doesn't pay Mr. Record Distributor promptly, so Mr. Record Distributor can't pay his bills promptly. Or, more commonly, Mr. Record Distributor writes himself a big fat check and taps out his checking account on himself and thus can't pay his bills. No matter what, the record label is ultimately the one who is asked to bend over and slather up with Crisco. It's very frustrating for a label. The general rule is this: 1. The bigger the distributor, the bigger the retail accounts being serviced. 2. The bigger the retail account, the more demanding and arrogant they are that about their perceived fundamental right to return unsold goods to the distributor and thus the label. It took me five years, but I finally figured out that the game is rigged and that if labels play the mass marketing game, they're gonna wind up as victims in body bags. The only way to play the mass marketing game and win is to chase HOT-HOT bands and to jump on every shitty bandwagon and two-bit marketing trend. It means putting out fucking compilations when comps are hot, and putting out shitty ska bands when ska is hot, and putting out tribute albums when tribute albums are hot. It means putting marketability on a pedestal as the alpha and omega of one's labeldom, and constantly questing to "sign" the "next big thing." Fuck that shit! I don't care about making money by shifting 25,000 units of some bogus bullshit ska band or some glossy SoCal buttrockers via cheesy record stores in shopping malls. Mutant Pop exists to document a scene and to help worthy bands find their audience of music fans and to help inspire others to start similar bands. It's an old school underground punk rock label wearing new clothes. Either you recognize that or you don't-that's sure as hell what's firing MY engine, though. I toyed with the mass marketing world just long enough to figure out that it has nothing to do with me as a person or my label as an institution, and whatever errors I have made in that regards have been corrected and will not be repeated.

J: Do these major (and major-label affiliated) distributors simply believe they can have their way with "the little guys"? It just seems like SO MANY labels have a problem with the "big" distributors. How do the indies get around that, outside of not dealing with distributors at all?

T: The big distributors are ALL assholes. The only medium-sized distributors with integrity are Revolver USA and Mordam. You can write that quote on your wall in spray paint, it's absolutely true. There are a few little guys like me that pay their bills more or less on time but it's an ugly world out there in distrib-

ution land. The basic problem is this: the retail chains have hundreds and hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of stores. They can take thousands of copies of a single title and can make them go away. As long as they only have to pay for what sells, it's a very profitable situation for the retailers. They have ENORMOUS clout over distributors due to their high power in the retailing world, and so basically they call the tune. If stuff sells at retail, everyone is happy. As soon as a title doesn't perform in the malls across America, the stuff gets returned and the label ends up poor and choking on broken jewel boxes.

J: How close do you cut it when it comes to keeping the label going? Have you ever been in danger of going under if a release didn't sell a certain number of copies?

T: I like that commercial that says "never let them see you sweat." I've had to sweat a few times, and even let people see me sweat recently when I simultaneously had \$6000 in bills associated with my short-run CD series and a \$5200 recording bill with the Connie Dungs at Sonic Iguana come in - in addition to a regular schedule of releases and a couple MORE fairly costly recordings. I'm not made of money. I started this label with

\$10,000 that I saved up, and let's say that five years and countless hours later I've got 25,000 chips, spread out in unsold inventory, my stock for mail order, unreleased recordings, and a checkbook balance. Sometimes things get a little bit scary, but like I've said before, doing a label is not really fun unless you can walk up to the edge of the abyss and spit into the pit. I push the release schedule hard. As long as pop-punk fans support me with their checkbooks, I survive. When I lose the big vote of confidence with the fans, the label will be crushed. So far so good. As long as I continue to work hard and release quality, I can only be optimistic about the future.

J: Typically, how much money do you bring in (or lose) if you sell 700 copies or so of a single? Does 7" vinyl EVER make a profit?

T: Seven inch vinyl is really touch and go from a financial standpoint. You CAN make money doing the format, but the expected value of any given 7" release is negative; the money-makers are the exception to the rule and the black ink generated by the minority of successful titles does not offset the red ink generated by the majority of smaller-selling releases. It's basically a math question. How much do you spend on a recording? Do you

go for the cheapest vinyl plant and the nastiest sleeve or do you drop bucks on quality? Do you mark up prices of the records a lot and sell fewer or try to hold the price down and sell as many as you can? Given the choices I have made, I sell 700 copies and still end up in the hole. You could press up 500 and break even, given a different set of numbers. You could even make the choices I have made and sell multiple thousands of copies of a really hot release and end up buying shares of Converse stock for the band's singer. Nothing is written in stone, but I wouldn't advise anyone to make 7" vinyl intending to make money, that's for damned sure!

J: For many people, Mutant Pop singles are closely connected with the fact that the first pressings are on colored vinyl. Yet many other labels have pressed colored vinyl editions with less attention and hoopla. Why do you think the colored vinyl versions of Mutant Pop 7" records get so much attention while others do not?

T: Using colored vinyl for first pressings or portions of a first pressing is an age-old tradition in the music world. I'm not sure who came up with the idea, but certainly the major labels were doing it for various



Basically, punk came back from the grave while the production of recorded music has become increasingly decentralized and less subject to the whims of a handful of money-grubbing suits in LA and NYC.

Britpunk releases as early as 1977. So the use of colored vinyl to build collector interest almost certainly predates punk as we know it. There are lots of labels that are doing colored vinyl for all or some of the first pressing: TKO, Just Add Water, Bulge, Doctor Strange, Break-Up, and Rapid Pulse-just to name a few. The one thing that I do that everyone else doesn't do is print the size of the pressing and the shade of the wax of the colored vinyl edition on the record sleeve itself: "First 500 on Red Vinyl," or whatever. When people happen to land a black vinyl version of a Mutant Pop release, they know that there's still a colored version out there, and maybe trying to find one of those becomes important to them. I kyped the idea from Sub Pop.

collector I think they're pretty cool for what they are AS a set. That's the bottom line about the rainbow of vinyl colors and the cookie cutter sleeves - the collectors understand. The corollary of the theory of building a set is that each individual band becomes somewhat less pivotal to the success or failure of a given release in finding a market. There are thousands upon thousands of records made every year and people have to make their buying decisions based upon something. Some people read reviews and chase records based upon the opinion of a voice they trust. Other people race around buying all the releases of their favorite bands - the records may be good, bad, or otherwise

vinyl is never going to be as inexpensive and easy to manufacture as a CD-R. What we will see over the next five years is a dramatic lessening of the much-ballyhooed "vinyl glut," as young bands stop dreaming of a first 7" and start putting out their own stuff as self-made CD-R's. As an adherent of the DIY ethic, I see this as a terrific turn of events-it's gonna reduce the power of labels, distributors, and music retailers, and make it possible for bands to hook up with fans without external control and exploitation.

From the perspective of a music fan, the explosion of CD-R's is going to prove to be a mixed bag. If you thought there were lots of bad 7"ers being made a few years ago, just

wait until you get a load of the land-



Tim in the heady days of 1982

along with the whole all-the-sleeveslook-the-same schtick. I'm actually stunned that no one seems to have followed my lead. Helping people build discographies and publicizing pressing numbers is very basic stuff in terms of trying to garner collector support.

J: What IS the theory behind all the 7" sleeves looking alike, by the way?

T: Again, I freely admit that I lifted the idea from early Sub Pop, who themselves doubtlessly stole the idea from someone else. I've had one person mention that the jazz label Blue Note did something similar, but I'm out of my depth there and really can't say that for sure. I'll answer the question with another question: why do baseball cards all look alike within a set? Because collectors like filling sets, that's why. It's fun tracking down the missing pieces of the puzzle and putting them all in a row. That's also why coin collectors chase down the same type of coin a hundred times with minor date and mintmark variations-they're filling a set. Not only do I like the MP sleeves personally, but as a

- the quality is incidental. With MP, many people are filling the set-buying them for the sleeve and the wax with the entire content more or less incidental. This gives me a degree of freedom to work with new bands and to put out releases by lesser known luminaries, and to live to tell the tale. Obviously, if the records don't rock in the long run, people aren't going to care about the set. So maintaining quality and building a label "sound" is imperative for

J: So what's going to happen to 7" vinyl now that CD-R technology has penetrated the market? Will vinyl singles be headed out the door?

Mutant Pop's continued survival.

T: I don't view CD-Recordable discs and 7" vinyl as antithetical technologies. Both have their positive and negative aspects. CD-R's will never have as much style or generate the same level of interest to record collectors that 7" vinyl is capable of generating. Seven-inch

slide of abysmal shit that is headed our way on CD-R's by 2005! There will be much whimpering for the good old days of the vinyl glut, when quality still

meant something, mark my words. But there will also be more great stuff finding the light of day as a result of this process, and the persistent music fan will be rewarded for lending an ear to CD-R releases. I've actually been thinking very hard about CD-R technology, as it applies to little labels like Mutant Pop, since I first started seeing CD-R demo "tapes" in 1998. I can't speak for other labels, but I do know that since MP is small and sonically focused. I do have a "brand name", if you will, that means something to a certain segment of the punk world. You may not like the "Mutant Pop Sound". You may well get more satisfaction listening to the absorption of skim milk by the morning mush or whatever, but once you hear the sound, you will pretty well know what it is. If I keep the figurative "quality net" up and begin making releases in the CD-R format with the Mutant Pop imprint, I theorize that pop-punk fans will care about the output and will support these releases with their dollars. If this is true, all of a sudden the world shifts.

I'm going to drop some numbers on you here to illustrate the point. Instead of spending \$70 to cut lacquers, \$130 to plate, \$85 for labels, \$750 or whatever to press, \$30 for bags, and \$300 for sleeves, the cost of doing a release all of a sudden drops to \$100 for sleeves (since the sleeves are small enough that they can be run in gangs of 3 by the regular sleeve printer) plus the cost of CD-R media. I had 1000 CD-R blanks printed up with a Mutant Pop logo for \$1450, and I'm gonna be stuffing them into little vinyl flips with anti-scuff felt that I bought for around 30 cents each about a year ago. Doing some more math, with CD-R's we sit at \$1.75 per disc, plus \$100 per project for the sleeve. Now it's not so important to sell 500 copies to get most of the chips back. Lemme tell ya, I can lose \$100 a project without flinchingyou've gotta see the balance sheets for a few of my projects to understand. I've got a double 7" project that's still like \$1800 in the hole after the better part of a year. You could fund half of a very active CD-R release year with that many chips. As long as the bands pay for the recordings with the new format, the math is highly favorable. I'm going to sell these "Short-Run CDs" for \$4 by mail, with a buck from every disc sold going to the band

to help compensate them for the cost of the recording. And bands will be able to buy unlimited quantities of the release for basically the cost of production, \$2 a slice, and thus will have something cool to sell at shows. I'll clear about a buck per copy sold, which will help offset my up-front costs: a DAT deck, a sound card in my Mac, mastering software, a single CD-R burner hooked up to the machine, and a 6-up CD replicator. I'd like to pass along an address just in case any other labels are interested in following my lead. It's VERY hard to find anyone who will sell you blank CD-R media screenprinted with your logo-regular replication plants do NOT want to touch this work, generally speaking, so I can save people three steps here. I got my imprinted CD-R blanks from Shimad. Call up Adam at 1-888-474-4623 for a price quote.

J: You've made a big push in the past year or so away from stores and towards mail order. How has this affected the label? Are you selling as many records now? Will mail order be able to keep the label going for a few more years?

T: Part of walking away from The Music Industry has meant leading a steady

stream of non-paying distributors to the figurative brick wall and blowing their figurative heads off with a figurative automatic rifle. There's a certain grim satisfaction in making those guys go away, but eventually it's gonna be down to the one distributor who pays and a couple others who trade. Mordam told me to piss off on October 1, 1997, so I'm stuck fending for myself. Maybe I should start putting out acoustic lesbian folksingers or something, and then reapply. I just don't understand what Mordam workers are thinking when they add some of those shitty labels they've been adding lately. Punk in My Vitamins? Mr. Lady? Terrible dogshit to the sixth power. Give me a fucking break! Sour grapes, whatever. Back to the question: It's hard to drop bucks on a CD recording and then to sell 300 copies in six months or whatever. Compact Discs have such a huge profit margin that they'll all eventually break even, but the lack of volume associated with the relative lack of wholesale distribution does lock up chips longer than the optimum, and thus negatively affects the number of albums that I'm able to release. But I'll make it go with mail order. I have to.

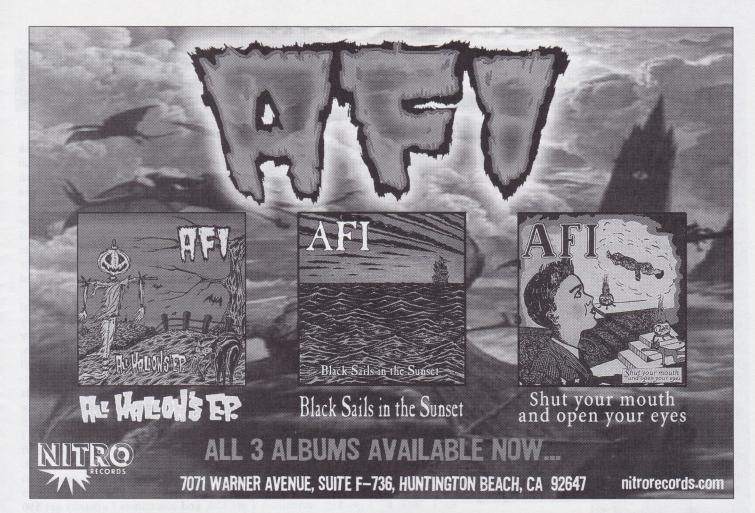
J: Generally, one can say that independent labels exist purely out of a love for the music. But that seems to be the case to a greater degree with Mutant Pop. I know that you've never put out a record for a band that you didn't (at least at the time) believe in. I don't always see that kind of passion from other labels-that willingness to say, "All my bands rock!" Are you among the last of a dying breed, or will there be more labels like Mutant Pop in the future?

J: I think that there are tons of labels out there that believe 100% in the stuff they release. Allied Recordings is one terrific example: the cat put out bands he believed in and racked up an impressive 100 releases. And then he walked away. Labels like Sympathy for the Record Industry, Break-Up, Get Hip, Bulge-they're doing it because they believe in it. The underground is exciting because it's all about fans making records for fans, and putting out bands that believe in what they're doing and that leave the grasping for the brass ring to someone else. It's a fascinating world. There's very exciting stuff being created, and new enthusiasm is being injected by new bands and label-dudes all the time. Making records is definitely the best hobby that I've ever had!

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A BOOZE-INSPIRED LONGSHOT HOPE FOR THE NEW AGE...

ast January, I finally got wise and quit my job for good. Unlike all the OTHER times over the years that I have exchanged one shitty job for another, this time when I said "I quit", it was for real. I've been totally beaten to a pulp mentally in the workplace. My occasional twice a year visits from those nasty little suicidal-impulse demons had increased in frequency to twice a week.

If you want to read the long version of my rise and fall in the warehouses, retail stores, and office cubicles of the

Thinkin' & Drinkin' w/ The Whiskey Rebel.

MEMBER

workplace (plug, plug!), my new book Jobjumper is at the printers even as I write this. Would you believe that for a year or so I was a

American

three-piece suit-wearing manager for a big national company? I also

worked for Radio Shack for three years. I even sold toilets at Sears. It's a helluva story, if I do say so myself. For info on

acquiring a copy of this 300 + page masterpiece, you can e-mail me, write me, or (better yet) contact the folks from *Carbon 14* who are actually publishing it. In that case you should write to Larry at: Steel Cage Books, c/o Full Contact Graphics, PO Box 29247, Philadelphia, PA 19125.

For the purposes of this column let's skip over the misery and injustices I've suffered for almost a quarter of a century while working at shitty, degrading jobs. Instead, simply try to picture me last January...happy as hell to be finally free from bosses and

co-workers for the first time in my adult life. Drinking beer and knocking down shots of "Rebel Yell" whiskey in my "Whiskey Rebel throne" every night, ALL NIGHT LONG...until it was time to drive my kid to school in the morning.

For almost a quarter of a century my existence had been essentially a repetition of a pattern that I'm sure most of you are famil-

iar with: wake, shit, eat, work, eat, drink, sleep. Yet only a week into my new life as a self-employed man, I was startled to find that I was sleeping less, working more, and-gasp!-drinking less, much less, than I was used to. I've been drinking almost every day since I was 15, and usually start around 6:00 PM at the latest. After the pressures of the job were removed, I found myself not even thinking of that first ice cold brew until it was almost fucking midnight! Some nights I felt so relaxed that I actually had to force myself to get started drinking. Fortunately, with a bit of effort, I eventually found a new groove...a new alcoholism pattern that is damned comfortable.

My freedom from the workplace was made possible by one of the greatest technological advancements during the course of my lifetime, the internet. I've been a thrift store/garage sale hound for the last 20 years. Over the years I've mostly looked for records, and a year ago a friend finally got around to telling me that vinyl rarities sell consistently on E-bay, an internet auction marketplace. For years and years I've been finding rare as fuck records for pennies in thrift stores and flea markets. Unfortunately, since I don't have the dough or the desire to start up my own record store, I was at the mercy of asshole ripoff record store owners if I wanted to sell a record for profit. If I found a \$20 album at a thrift store for 50 cents, a record store as shole would give me \$3 for it. Oh, boy! A profit of \$2.50! Nowadays, I list the same \$20 album on E-bay for \$10. Lots of items don't sell at all. Happily, sometimes I get \$10, sometimes I get \$20, and sometimes I actually get \$50 or more! You oughta hear some of these asshole record store owners crying about the internet! The smart ones have bought computers themselves. Lots of them keep 'em right by their cash drawers and key in new items when their store isn't busy.

> There haven't been many other instances during my disappointing lifespan in which technology has clearly made my daily life better. I can spend a few hours a week digging up rare vinyl items and then sell them on an equal footing with retailers who have owned record stores for years. Some anonymous customer in Arizona or Sweden doesn't give a flying fuck if I own a store or not, or even if I drink while I work or screw knotholes in my backyard fence while wearing a Nazi uniform.

Unfortunately, as the last days, hours, and minutes of the century and the millennium are dramatical-

ly counted down by irritating, moronic media idiots, it's damned hard for me to see how my life is going to be any better in any other way in the next millennium. I consider it a bit of fluke luck that the internet rescued me from having to spend nine hours a day bowing and scraping to supervisors. I had resigned myself to a lifetime of working alongside co-worker fools who were slowly

Some nights I felt so relaxed that I actually had to force myself to get started drinking. Fortunately, with a bit of effort, I eventually found a new groove...a new alcoholism pattern that is damned comfortable.

choking the will to live out of me. What's more, I still wouldn't put it past the Christians, the "concerned" liberals, or the "old money" aristocrats that own dwindling retail outlets to fuck up the internet for me. Not a week goes by in which I don't hear the news media, who have in some cases been sponsored by "old" retail money for years, attacking E-bay. I view my break from the world of 8:00 AM Monday job interviews, dress codes, and "playful teasing" from co-workers to be a much needed, though probably temporary, rest.

When I look back over my lifetime I see a distinct pattern of things getting WORSE rather than better all around me. My motto even as a teenager (a long fucking time ago) was "People are Worthless". You know what? People seem even dumber these days than they did back then. A lot dumber, in fact. People seem overjoyed in 1999 to allow the media, particularly television, to dictate what they will wear (MTV, VH1, etc.) and what their beliefs will be (Rikki Lake, Oprah, etc.). When I was a kid, average people seemed to be somewhat disgusted by brazen media manipulation. Even though they were fools back then too, at least they resisted it. Unless I'm reading present day people wrong, I think that today lotsa people actually think its shrewd or "cool" to accept lifestyle tips from the fucking boobtube. They don't seem to realize that they are being manipulated by advertising agencies into wasting their money on trendy purchases. The dumbasses' brains are actually deteriorating as time goes on. Who could have imagined that?

The products we use have plainly deteriorated in quality over the last 25 years, too. We drink soda out of ugly, shitty plastic tubes now instead of stately ice cold bottles. Alcohol and tobacco are regulated and taxed beyond belief! Sure, we were given the pocket calculator and the VCR and cool home video games like

WHISKEYREBEL

"DOOM" over the years. But almost everything else around me is worse. New automobiles have been getting steadily worse for years, and over the past 25 or so years they've been increasingly designed so that the average Joe can't make repairs on his own car...nowadays you need to take your car to a dealership to be repaired. (Did the supposedly informed American consumer bother to complain? Hell, no!) They're also increasingly small and uncomfortable, and even the bumpers are 99% made out of goddamned plastic, for fuck's sake! They just aren't any fun to drive or own. Chalk up another one for the "do-gooders" who have lobbied for all that mandatory and expensive safety and anti-pollution equipment.

Moreover, when I was a little kid riding in the back seat of my parents' car, the view was dramatically improved by cool neon signs and bridges and buildings that were actually designed to look different and unique. During the last few pre-millenial years, those classic neon signs have been yanked down by the forces of progress and replaced by those yuppie-preferred emerald green and brass awnings. Almost all of the beautiful old indoor theaters are gone. Drive-in theaters were one of society's greatest sources of pleasure fifty years ago, and they too have been almost totally eliminated in favor of 12-screen mall cinemas that all look alike. (On top of that, I can't even attend movies anymore. I'm tired of having the movie ruined by mouthy and assholic hip-hop fans who rudely shout "clever" catch phrases at the screen non-stop.) As for guitars, who wouldn't rather own a vintage model rather than one of the soulless hunks of crap that are manufactured



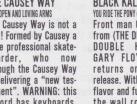




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nowadays? Sadly, the decline of quality goods hasn't brought about any major complaints from consumers. On the contrary, people actually seem to be pleased by the changes!

As I've already pointed out, it's frightening how stupid the masses are these days. We've never had more scientific data available with which to cast doubts upon society's superstitious religions, yet the churches are raking in the loot from their offering plates and land deals. Look at how many ripoff cults have come along during the last years of the millennium? They're thriving these days like never before, since they've become even more adept at manipulating foolish people by playing on their fears.

And get this! When the yuppies who are currently in power were still hippies, I thought they actually stood for personal free-

dom. Hmmm. In reality, they turned out to be total fucking hypocrites! Here's an example of "freedom" in politically correct America. My 15-year old son was asked to write an "opinion" piece for an English class. His chosen topic was "This is NOT a Free Country". He read his paper aloud in class. He touched upon age restrictions on freedom, limitations on our rights to guzzle alcohol and own firearms, and the impact perceived between all the diverse racial groups in our country has had upon our FREE-

DOM to even walk down many streets in our country. As a result of reading this paper to his class, poor Elvis was sent to be "counseled" the next day. Why? Because an anonymous classmate interpreted his paper as signifying that my son was about to go off on a Columbine-style rampage. What??? Is this what "Pokeman" has done to the brains of today's youth? This sort of thing wouldn't have even happened during the so-called "dark ages" of the Eisenhower administration. Not to mention the fact that kids have increasingly been programmed to think that "it's all right" to be a rat fink.

There are many other shockingly idiotic trends being foisted upon and happily lapped up by the masses these days. One of them is the "beany baby" insanity that currently has a grip on America. E-bay hosts literally hundreds of thousands of beany auctions every fucking week. People shell out up to hundreds of dollars for worthless little beanbag animals that cost 20 cents to make. WHY? What the fuck can you do with them? I DON'T GET IT. I JUST DON'T FUCKING GET IT. I feel lonely and out of touch because I DON'T UNDERSTAND what their goddamn appeal is based on. They're just stinking little beanbags! Yet there are huge beany baby dealerships that manage to rake in mountains of money. The "beany" mentality is only the latest of a series of unfathomable hobbies that I see people totally obsessed with. How 'bout "Furbys"? Remember "Cabbage Patch Dolls"? How about all the lunatics that deal in McDonald's "happy meal" cheap plastic toys as if they are rare gems? I'm not talking about a couple hundred isolated nuts here; thousands and thousands of

Americans are totally obsessed with these worthless, juvenile, plastic hunks of junk.

Elsewhere on the net, classic toys from the 1940s through the 1970s are also being sold, including boardgames which possess at least a modicum of challenge to one's intellect, dolls that were manufactured to last and be passed down from generation to generation, and metal toy cars that are beautiful works of art. Unfortunately, in the "beany baby" era you're not going to find quality toys like these in stores. You will, however, see plenty of heavily-hyped cheap hunks of worthless plastic that are designed to last about a week.

It's hard to conceive of a better example of how the world has gone down the toilet than by turning to music. Ever since the promising flurry of punk rock creativity twenty-odd years ago, I've been watching music go nowhere. The punk rock rebellion in England soon degenerated into a boring, same-y sounding "movement" of lame synthesizer-pop, "New Wave". American punk rock

evolved into generic hardcore in the early- to mid-80s. A set of rules was erected, and any bands that strayed beyond those unwritten by widely accepted set of hardcore fashion and ideology rules-like mine, for instance-were treated like dirt by the hardcore scene.

And generic hardcore begat speed metal.

And speed metal begat grunge.

And "punk", neutered and stripped of any gut-level rage (and therefore having little or nothing in common with

the real punk rock of the late 1970s), was watered down enough to temporarily "break" commercially in America.

Twenty or so years ago, "industrial" music appeared to me to show at least some promise. Here were some sincerely evil people making some truly ugly sounds, including metallic scrapings and tape loops. Nowadays, of course, the authentic madmen have been effectively weeded out of the commercial "industrial" scene. They've been replaced by aspiring career musicians for whom scary-sounding tape loops are a viable career option. With money at stake, instead of creating their own ugly sounds, they merely "sample" (i.e., STEAL) other peoples'. What about Rap? It seemed as though some of the early rappers were true outsiders and outlaws, but nowadays rap HAS BECOME THE MAINSTREAM. "God" is thanked in the liner notes of almost every successful commercial rap release...if you don't believe me, go look for yourselves! At the same time, ugly racist vibes (anti-white, anti-oriental, etc.) are frequently expressed, openly or in code, on these same MAIN-STREAM rap releases (see my column in Hit List #1: "Racist Rap Hurts my Feelings") without generating any outcry whatsoever. Even the self-proclaimed "anti-racists" soon revealed themselves to be total hypocrites.

How about electronica? Will' it take over in the next century? I dunno. From what I've read, the music "biz" experts are still concerned that despite all their promotional efforts a huge percentage of teenage boys don't "connect" with electronica. I've suffered through many hours of listening to electronic horseshit at Tower, and I just don't see how it's "progressed" much beyond the old

70's KRAFTWERK albums. Sadly, country music went down the toilet years ago (see my column in issue #5), and even clever novelty songs are gone without a trace. I remember hearing lots of novelty songs on the radio up until 1980 or so. What happened? Did the music industry lose its sense of humor?

There are still lots of great obscure rock and roll bands to be enjoyed, but you need to read a publication like this one to find out about them. Back in 1980 I never expected that by the year 2000, kickass rock and roll would become the "endangered species" that it nowadays seems to be. I expected it to be thriving.

My band started out in 1981 trying to be "different" by shucking off the narrow restrictions of the rock and roll format, but nowadays (even though we are still known as a band filled with cynical assholes) we vocally, enthusiastically support keeping rock and roll alive. Why have we changed our attitudes? Why do we now feel that it's worth saving? Because nothing else has come along to replace it yet. The music industry is doing everything it can to destroy rock and roll, just as they've already eviscerated and destroyed country music beyond all recognition, and to replace it with other musical forms like rap and electronica. Unfortunately, they've just about succeeded-take a look at any recent top 40 chart.

I read a statement a few years ago by Mick Jagger, who predicted that after the year 2000 music recorded BEFORE 2000 would be either consciously or subconsciously considered obsolete. Is Mick right? I want to make a few things clear. If the new era brings about better automobiles, staplers that don't jam, toilet paper that doesn't disintegrate into a hundred balls of pulp that cling to my ass, a political system that produces candidates worth voting for, and a genre of music that's BET-

TER than rock and roll, well, hell's fucking bells! SIGN ME UP!

I've gotten used to gradually sealing myself off more and more thoroughly from the human race and the modern consumer products that seem to delight it so. I've never expected things to magically turn around during my lifetime, but an idea popped into my head the other day. What if the much ballyhooed approaching end of the century and millennium has somehow been responsible for the steady decline in the quality of life which I've been experiencing? I'm not a sociologist, just a drunk who strains his brain now and then. But it seems to me possible, perhaps even logical, that the pendulum could begin to swing back in the other direction after the first of January. Perhaps the mass behavior that upsets me so much is merely a reflection of humanity holding back its best efforts in the face of the ominous milestone we are fast approaching. It's not THAT unreasonable of a theory. Look around at the people you work with or attend school with on a daily basis. You NEVER see people busting their asses or beginning new projects a half hour before the end of the workday! In every office I've ever worked in, Friday afternoon has always resulted in a sharp decline in productivity. Perhaps next January will usher in a WHOLE NEW ERA in which human

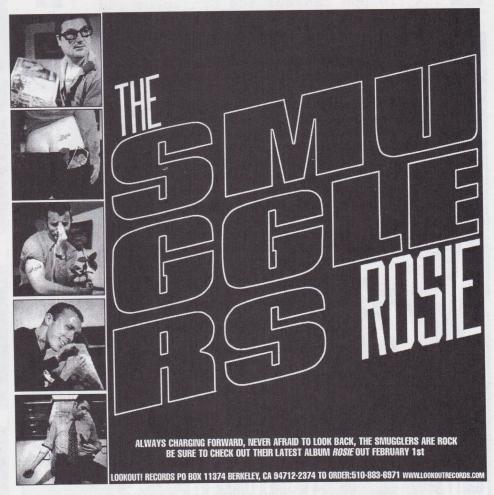
WHISKEYBEBEL

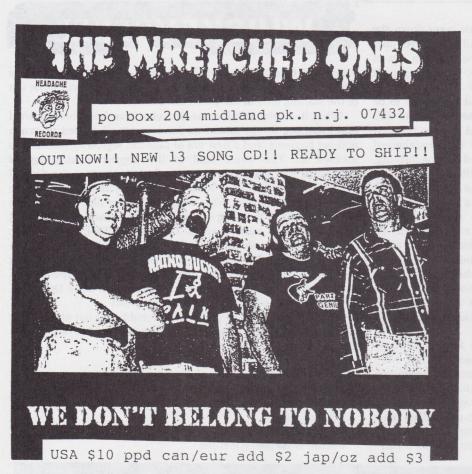
beings will take pride in their long-neglected intellects. Maybe the long-awaited "next big thing", musically speaking, will burst out of the starting gate of the new millennium.

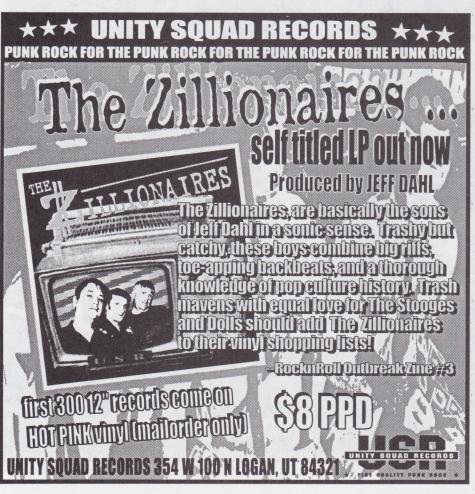
What if all the religious kooks who have been brainwashed into expecting things to end on January 1st all get fed up when nothing happens, and a new era of rational, logical agnosticism is ushered in? This could lead to the biggest fucking age of unabashed fun, substance abuse, and gluttony since the days of the Roman Empire. That would RULE! Just think...it could be right around the corner. What would be a more likely time for the pendulum of fate to swing upwards in a hedonistic, jolly reversal of the last several suckass years? I almost NEVER have optimistic feel-good hunches about the future. Like I said, I resigned myself to things getting gradually worse throughout my lifetime a long time ago. I'm NOT convinced that the rotten human species will gravitate towards "wising up" after January 1st, but I DO recognize it as a possibility. Wouldn't that be great?

Of course a fucking airplane will probably fall out of the fucking sky and strike me dead just as things are about to improve, so I'm not getting my hopes up too much.

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HIT SQUAD

ADOLF, THE AMWAY REP OF DEATH

[Author's note: The names and situations for this piece have been slightly altered so that some nitwit(s) without a sense of humor won't decide to throw me into litigation and make me unleash my raw meateating, whiskey-drinking Viking of a lawyer out of the cell I keep him chained in in a basement in Oregon. Also, I apologize for the lack of pictures, but when you read the story you'll know why I didn't include any. If post-mortem gore is your gig try www.rotten.com. That'll give you an idea of the pictures I could have included.]

IT'S JOB HUNTING SEASON, GO GET YOUR GUN

mway and the dead. Surely not an original coupling of nouns in a sentence, or an original thought on my part. The gushing rivers of the damned, doomed, and living dead have flowed through the hallowed hallways of Amway. Amway, the American way. Pyramid/ponzi schemes based on selling others into selling others into selling others ad infinitum until at the end, or allegedly somewhere along the way, some kind of product other than cash changes hands.

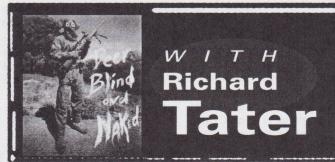
"Amway has a ten billion dollar infrastructure, all if it paid for in CASH," Adolf eventually said to me with that look that rests somewhere between the netherworld of the deadpan bureaucrat and the enthusiastic Jesus freak/ex-druggie alcoholic trying desperately to lie to everyone, including himself. He's not really named Adolf, but his last name was Hitler, the first Hitler by name I've ever met, so I'll call him Adolf for this piece.

I met Adolf after answering a classified add in the local newspaper for Last Rides, Inc. Adolf is the H.N.I.C., i.e., the President/Owner/Operator. A sort of creepy, hands-on style of boss, Adolf even goes out on calls when "the help is short." Somehow I don't think that's his true M.O. Like most who choose to work around the deceased, he has that edgy and morose air about him, and it's not just his borderline beady yet baggy fish eyes, either. Adolf looks almost like the white collar Company man from the briefing scene in "Apocalypse Now", the one who said "Terminate with extreme prejudice." There is, if you'll pardon the hippy-speak, a strange vibe about the dude. I think he enjoys going out on the more juicy homicide calls. The way he described the pick-up he had the previous evening, a multiple shotgun homicide, it seemed as if there was too much excitement in his voice for a jaded, bored pro just doing his job.

I had brought back my app' and was invited to sit down for an interview. After running me through a few standard questions, he skipped the usual "what do you see yourself doing 10 years from now?" style questions and cut to the chase. "Do you understand the nature of this job?" I answered curtly in the affirmative. "You realize that you will be removing human remains from crime scenes, traffic accidents, suicides?" I told him that I had read the rather long, multiple-page job synopsis he'd handed me along with the app'. There was no "I'll be getting my gold watch from your fine company"-style Q. and A. bullshit for this job. I'm sure it had a high burnout rate, and that it was something that people who were career-oriented in the field - working with the dead - did while studying forensics before going on to mortuary school or one of the many jobs in the coroner's office, and/or because they're sick fucks who actually enjoy the

death/sex aspects of the work. Adolf seemed to like how I handled myself and set me up for a ride-along on the following Saturday. This unpaid little trip into the death's head up the sphincter of the Inland Empire was a prerequisite to getting hired.

So far all this wasn't that shocking. I knew what I was getting into. The shock began when he asked me, "Have you ever thought about going into business for yourself?" (Uh, oh.) I told him about my familial history of nightclub, bar, and small business owners that ran several generations deep, and how along with the military, another family tradition, I had steered clear of those kind of entanglements. "Because I got something you might be interested in," he rudely blurted out the moment



I paused to take a breath. "I've been working with Goldstar for a couple of years now. Goldstar is a direct marketing business opportunity that utilizes the internet."

"Like Amway, but online?" I said, trying to keep my emotions at a Spock-like level.

"Matter of fact, it is Amway. It's Amway's new internet division that'll take Amway into the new millennium."

I nodded as he programatically went from a man who scoops people's brains off the highway to some robot pod-person spewing forth a well-rehearsed business "blah blah blah" that was meant to bring me into the fold. Un-fucking-believable. The only thing that held back my uncontrollably-pissing-in-my-pants laughter was the shock of being pimped Amway at a job interview for a mortuary company. If this weird fuck would have asked me to come to Jesus, I wouldn't have been half as mortified. I would have expected God babble around a corporation that carts bodies. As if applying for a job as a human trash collector wasn't surreal enough, this freak starts trying to sell me into slinging mail-order soap. Jesus, what a world.

"Does he do this to everyone," I thought, as I looked around the room. It looked like a legit' business. It had all the trappings of what I think a mortuary transport company would have - beepers, cell phones, long lists of morgues, hospitals, and mortuaries on the wall. There were even a couple of meat wagons out front. Was Allen Funt in the back waiting to spring out of some closet?

Then the real paranoia hit me. Had this fuck been able to accomplish a game against me that I thought I had learned not to fall for? the old bait-and-switch in the classifieds. Some pyramid scam company like Amway, NSA water filters, FundAmerica, etc., takes out an ad that looks like a warehouse job just to get you and countless hundreds of other boobs to come down and hear their pitch. There you are in some decades-old warehouse district in your job interview/wedding/funeral/court appearance suit filling out an app' with about fifteen other dupes, only to find out in a group interview that the only lifting of products you're going to be doing are the ones that you purchase first. If this was just a front for Amway, then it was

HIT SQUAD



the most deviously disguised trap designed to draw people into their go-nowhere, fundies-for-funds fuckaround that I had ever fallen into.

I was appalled and caught off guard. Morbid fantasies of picking up limbs off highways disappeared, and all of a sudden I'm hit with the usual ham-fisted segue that, under normal circumstances, I would have repelled with a fire and brimstone rant along the lines of this: "I'd suck scabby, clap-dripping, Skid Row cock for T-bird and crack rather than sell Amway, you snake-oil selling carpetbagger of a child fucker!!!" But I didn't. This situation was too weird to be a front. Unless, of course, Amway had exhausted the suburbanite, proletariat, house-cow market and decided to go after new demographics. He held in his hands what looked to be the most repulsively weird and interesting job I had ever gone after, so I kept my diatribe at bay. When he was finished performing a speech he had probably rehearsed and presented a thousand times before, I told him I would consider his offer. That was my first lie. We were off to a great start.

A repulsive, flaccid doughnut of a man came wheezing into the office, and I was introduced to Rex. (One guy was named after a fascist dictator, the other's name meant "king". This experience was turning into a Thomas Pynchon novel directed by David Lynch. I was waiting for a midget named Attila the Hun to come out of a broom closet speaking backwards.) Rex was the head of the meat drivers. I sat myself down in his little, barren office to get acquainted with my future manager. cramped cubicle had no pictures, no calendar, clicheridden placards saying things like "The Buck Stops Here", Jesus paraphrenalia, etc. The nothing said it all. If Adolf's eyes were borderline

beady, this blob's balloon of a head only accentuated a set of pervie pinpoint peepers that screamed "necrophile child-molester!"

Rex seemed to take relish in the fact that he can perform a job that most people would consider cruel and unusual punishment. It's probably the only accomplishment that he can raise a toast to in his entire pathetic life. Or at least the only one he could admit to without any legal repercussions. Taking pride in one's job is something that's normally considered noble, but come on! Hanging iron at 110 stories, rushing into a burning building to rescue an infant, landing a 747 in a hailstorm with two engines down, writing a great novel, fucking 101 women or men during an 18-hour shoot, these are things in which to be proud. Being able to roll into a 650-pound shut-in's apartment and stuff his three week dead, exploded, and liquified remains into a bag without barfing, although necessary, is not noble.

Repugnant is the operative term here.

I probably shouldn't harsh on this guy's life's work too much, because if I can hack this job I'll probably be bragging to my friends about my stoic abilities over a pitcher of suds. Come Saturday, I'll find out.

BRING OUT YOUR DEAD. I'M FEELING A BIT PECKISH

After several runs for remains, Amway is beginning to sound like a sane and sterling opportunity. I'm sitting here over a recently opened bottle of Knob Creek that's already a third gone. I've refused to let my ice cubes get dry, and am keeping them a lovely wet carmel color. This bottle was an absolute necessity after today. What a fucking job! I could never take it full time, as my alcoholism would reach critical levels in a few months. I did it for ten hours and that's it. This

is participatory journalism at its rankest. I went to the show, got the t-shirt, and now there's no need to go on tour. Fuck 'em.

Initially I figured I could hang with the job for 90 days, keep an extensive journal, take some juicy photos, and get a decrepit book out of the experience, tentatively entitled The Meat Wagon Memoirs. I'll settle for one column sans pictures. Six bodies are all that I ever want to deal with. Forget the fact that Adolf only pays his drivers \$10 per corpse and keeps you on call 24 hours, 6 days a week. They could pay me \$50 dollars an hour and give me the cake schedule of my dreams, and I would still not do this job ever again.

First off, as a transport driver you're the lowest-level bastard on the scene. You're the janitor at Microsoft whose walked into a high-level board meeting to empty the overstuffed trash can,

while Bill Gates is telling his billionaire cronies about some new plot for world domination. Everyone else on the scene is a career-orient-ed pro. The cops, the firefighters, the paramedics, the coroners (who don't handle the body much), and even the hacks from the local paper get more respect than the meat drivers. You're there to take out the fucking garbage, nothing more and nothing less. I'm surprised that the others at the scene don't ask for a tap dance or a shoe-shine before you remove the corpse(s).

In my ten hours I picked up six ex-humans together with the bulbous and flatulent Rex. Three old bags from convalescent homes, one suicide, one T.C. (traffic collision), and one "accidental" death at a private residence. There were no obvious murders, although the coroner was investigating the accidental death, which was initially reported as cranial trauma due to a fall. At first I was hoping for some 187's

in the hood. Some thug with an eight ball hemorrhage to his dome or a multitude of bullet wounds to the chest. No such luck. Now I'm just relieved I didn't get some hyper-carnage call or, worse yet, a decomposing body. The T.C. was bad enough, but I'll get to that later.

The first three calls came in the early afternoon. All three were from convalescent homes. Con-homes. Corporate warehouses for the ancient and elderly, whose reward for outlasting their peers is drugaddled confinement in a pastel prison while waiting for the good warden Jesus to grant them a pardon and send them on to the greener pastures of stone gardens. That's why we come in through the back door. Groceries in, vegetables out. These calls are "clean" pickups. No blood and guts. Occasional farting and post-mortem moans, especially on bumpy roads, and on rare occasions one might even sit up, but there is no carnage. They're already bagged and tagged. We just roll in the gurney, clip the hooks to the bag, and roll their bones through a small labyrinth of back hallways out of the sight of the still-existing clientele. Although you could probably roll the exposed naked corpse with sparklers sticking out of every hole through the main hall, and these demented dustfarters wouldn't notice a thing, decorum persists in fucking up what could be one of life's more demented pleasures.

Then they're brought into the specially-outfitted white suburban, and it's off to the ovens for grandma. All for the glorious reward of 5 dollars. I was informed that con-home and morgue runs only pay \$5 per pickup. You actually have to go digging for innards in order to get that extra finski'. No wonder these cheap bastards are always looking for drivers. Each call was quick, but in the end it was about three hours from the time we left the office till we got back. That's five dollars per hour to enter con-homes that have that rank smell of stale urine, death, and disinfectants, after which you roll across town with a bag of smelly old meat. Two of the pickups we made were of

She was a real track star. Her

arms were festooned with black

and blue marks and abscesses,

as were her inner thighs.

women who had made it into their eighties. The other one only made it to her late sixties, but she weighed over four bills. Hence she had eaten enough to make up for those two lost decades. That's the one thing about the dead. Old white women seem to last the longest, while minority males have the quickest

shelf life. I'm sure this trend persists throughout the rest of the

There was a down time of about two hours at the office, where I sat with Rex. Thankfully, he was not a real talker. Other than a few comments like, "Those con-home pickups are cake, you ain't seen nothing yet", we watched the tube. Well he watched the TV, sports I think, while I sat around mulling over what a Saturday night in the Inland Empire might bring me. Around five o'clock I got my first answer. Rex waddled over to the ringing phone, came out, and in his usual long-winded fashion said, "Suicide in Redlands." Ironically, as an early teen I grew up in Redlands and had contemplated suicide many times. I brought this up to Rex, and received the universal sign for "I don't get it" - eyes flat and a "uh, huh." You'd think a guy who deals with corpses would have a gallows sense of humor on the dark side. Roadkill is probably this guy's idea of a one-liner. Roadkill that's still moving and moaning, that is.

We were off. Normally someone more local would handle the call, but Rex was under orders to take me to some of the more grisly pickups to see if I could hack it. The pickup was in a hotel on the outskirts of the city in a desolate industrial area. It was the kind of hotel in which one could buy any amount of time, from an hour to a

RICHARDTATER

month, and purchase all of your illegal needs from its current occupants. The fire trucks had already split, along with the AMR boys. The white crime lab truck, together with about eight squad cars, filled the front parking area. Not much goes down in Redlands that the police don't have to instigate themselves. I've dealt with those goons several times in the past. The Rivercide and San Bernardino police get all the bad press, and rightly so, but the Redlands P.D. contains the meanest, stupidest bunch of rookie hardasses to don a badge and blue in the entire Inland Empire. The town's full of wealthy swine, and the cops have a green light to harass everyone poor, minority, and young who crosses the city limits. Everyone who fits the wrong profile is made to feel like some poor black that accidentally pulls off the Interstate 10 freeway into No Nigger, Texas, Population 173 WHITE PEOPLE, right at sundown.

The two cops that weren't circled into a cluster fuck talking about whose head they had happily kicked in were grilling the rather stoic Pakistani hotel clerks about the particulars of the corpse in the open room festooned with yellow tape. They were performing that Third World, head-shaking dance step called the "I know nothing." Surely, this was not the first dead body that they had to deal with. At some point during the pickup, Rex hipped me to the obvious when he told me that this hotel provides the company with a bit of business. We rolled the gurney and the bag under the yellow tape, past the cluster fuck of SS guards, and on into the cramped room. The older coroner and his young assistant were finishing up their pictures and notes. The body was of a somewhat attractive junky-looking white girl who looked to be in her twenties. She was naked, face up on the floor,

> with her head and torso surrounded by a halo of wrappers from various medical The medics probably ran a trach' tube down her throat, pumped shocked her, banged her with narcon, adrenaline, and who knows what else. She was somewhat bluish, and had ligature marks around her neck.

Rex had told me that he overheard the coroner talking about an O.D.

A drug O.D., plus strangulation. This wasn't any cry for help, she had had enough. She was a real track star. Her arms were festooned with black and blue marks and abscesses, as were her inner thighs. The few tattoos she had weren't as bad as one would expect, qualitywise. She had multiple piercings, a Caesarian scar, and even kept her pussy shaved. When Rex informed me that she was only sixteen in a somewhat more excited voice - very excited for him, so much so that I thought to myself, "Some morgue tech is going to have himself a little party" - but instead he said out loud, "That's a fuckin' tragedy." It was too bad that Rex was in the process of schooling a newbie rather than on this call by himself, or he might have taken a little longer to get her to the morgue.

He unclipped the bag, laid it out next to her, unzipped it, and told me to watch while he showed me the proper way to one man handle the load. I wondered if it had been an old dude if my hand's on initiation would have begun sooner. He picked up her top half, angled her into the bag then went to the feet and repeated the same maneuver. The girl weighed about 110 pounds, so I wasn't impressed. Then she was zipped, clipped to the gurney, covered with a purple cloth, and taken past the pigs and the dancing Paki's. She was then shoved

knick-knacks.

HIT SQUAD



into the truck with no pomp and circumstance; after all, she was just meat, albeit not as ripe as the last three had been. For this girl there will be no yearbook spread with frosty photos, shitty "we'll miss you forever" poems, and tumultuous scat-rock lyrics. She had probably dropped out some time ago. She was just another young burnout who was doing her part to save the state some money.

En route to the San Bernardino morgue we got beeped, and Rex used his cell. "T.C. at the 60, 91/215 interchange," he piped up. "Multi-fatality. We'll hit that after the drop." We rolled on to the S.B. morgue, which is a whole story unto itself, and quickly made our way to the accident site. As with taxi drivers and pizza delivery boys, the cops tend to turn a blind eye to moderate speed law abuse by mortuary drivers. We hit the expected traffic jam several miles outside of the interchange in question. Rex lit up a blue light on the dash and we rolled down the breakdown lane. I had taken the interchange in question a thousand times, and knew what a potential kill site it was. It was Dealy Plaza in vehicular manslaughter terms, a split-level clover leaf feeding two major freeways. Fender-bender city. On this particular night some drunk had barrelled into the slow-merging traffic with his Ford F350 at about 85 mph, turning several members of a Mexican family who were unfortunate enough to be on the driver's side into God's newest dinner guests.

We rolled past the road flares and the Vegas Strip of carnage and colored lights. Rex parked the truck slightly ahead of the car lot-sized group of emergency vehicles. We broke out the few tools of the trade, and made our way to a pile of twisted metal that was surrounded by yellow tarps. What was once a vehicle of some kind had been rendered into what looked like some bizarre piece of postmodern sculpture that had been brought to fruition by a talentless madman with an NEA grant. Maybe that was the M.O. of the Bubba in the truck. Dan White had the Twinkie defense, maybe this guy could use the auspices of modern art to weasel out of several counts of vehicular manslaughter.

Rex went over to some strapping, steroid monster of a CHP guy on the scene. Then he came back, and we walked over to the violent exhibit. He laid the bag next to the largest of the yellow tarps, unzipped it, and removed the tarp. Wow. It looked vaguely like it used to be a middle-aged Mexican man, with cranial lacerations that bled all over the place, massive cavity intrusions to the left lower back, abdomen, and just about everywhere on his left side. He had what appeared to be

a carne asada strip steak hanging out of his body. Fuck, it could have been what he had for lunch, and for all I knew it had spilled out of his ruptured stomach. Both his left arm and left leg had Joe Theisman syndrome. The truck apparently didn't slow down at all, since there were no skid marks prior to impact. It must have been just a horrific boom out of nowhere, precipitated by the sort of amateur fucking drunk who gives the sacred art of D.U.I. a bad name.

"Well, go to it man, this is the real test," said Rex, as I stood over the head and upper torso area. A similar halo of medical wrappers surrounded this guy's Halloween mask of a head. He still had the trach' tube sticking out of his mouth. His eyes were half open, and one was ruptured and filled with dark blood. I squatted, grabbed his shoulders, dead lifted his upper body, and

angled it into the bag. His left arm dog-legged backwards, dragging on the ground and hanging out of the bag area. I put it back in and proceeded to the lower half. Not thinking about the break in the leg, I tried to repeat the same maneuver with less success. The broken leg moved too freely. I could feel the bone and sinew grinding as I tried to pick him up.

I looked over at Rex, who was smiling at my "greenness", both in deed and on my visage. He chuckled a bit as he walked over and said, "If they still have pants on, use the pant legs." He grabbed both pant legs and Conan'd the lower part of the broken dead man into the bag. (I've since learned from a man I met recently who use to do this job that all this "procedure" was bull-shit. Just get the body in the bag any way you can, roll it, chuck it, kick it, just get it in and get it over with quickly.) I zipped up the bag and locked, covered, and loaded the cadaver into the truck. I felt kind of sick, but I didn't lose my lunch, in part because their was no lunch to lose (or any breakfast and dinner, for that matter). I had made sure not to eat anything. I knew my appetite would be negated by the job.

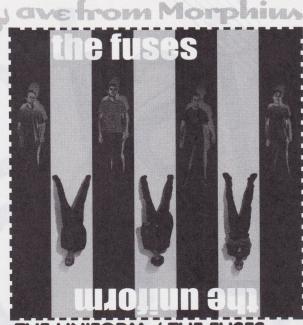
A trip to the ancient ivy-covered morgue of Rivercide was followed by a couple more hours of down time at the office, as Rex watched sitcoms. But I saw the surreal movie reel of the last two pickups flash by in my head. The last pickup of the night, at least my last pickup of the night, was a middle aged Rivercide man who had allegedly fallen and conked his head on the side of a pricey metal and glass coffee table. The gore was light compared to the T.C., although there was a dark red pool of coagulated blood on a very tasteful champagne carpet. He'd been there awhile, and rigamortis had set in. One thing about riga' is that it makes it easier to work with the body, since there isn't as much "dead" in the "dead weight" department.

I handled the call all by my lonesome and got the go-ahead from Rex to call it a night after the drop off. He would call Adolf and get me set up with my own meat wagon and beeper. He said the only situations worse than what I had dealt with were decapitations, severed limbs, eviscerations, and decomps, but he thought I could handle it. Little did he know that I would never see him again, unless he was picking my remains up off of the highway.

BURNING A BRIDGE OVER THE RIVER WHY

Wretchedly hungover from a fifth of Bourbon on an empty stomach, I called Adolf to inform him that a more lucrative job had dropped in my lap. Another lie, sort of. I calculated the income deriving from a burger flipping job at 60 hours a week, next to their 24 hour, 6 day a week horror show, and offset the income differential with the amount I would have to spend on booze and therapy. Fry cooking won hands down. He hit me with the Amway pitch once again, and because I live to burn bridges I gave him both barrels. I won't rehash the expletive driven verbal fist-fuck I gave him, but I won't be working in any area of the mortuary business in California any time soon. And I'm a better man for it. This is one club that you shouldn't want to join, one that will admit anyone who can take the rank, never-ending initiation. Kind of like Amway.

ENOUGH TO MAKE YOUR EARS BLEED YOUR EARS BLEED EARS BLEED BLEED



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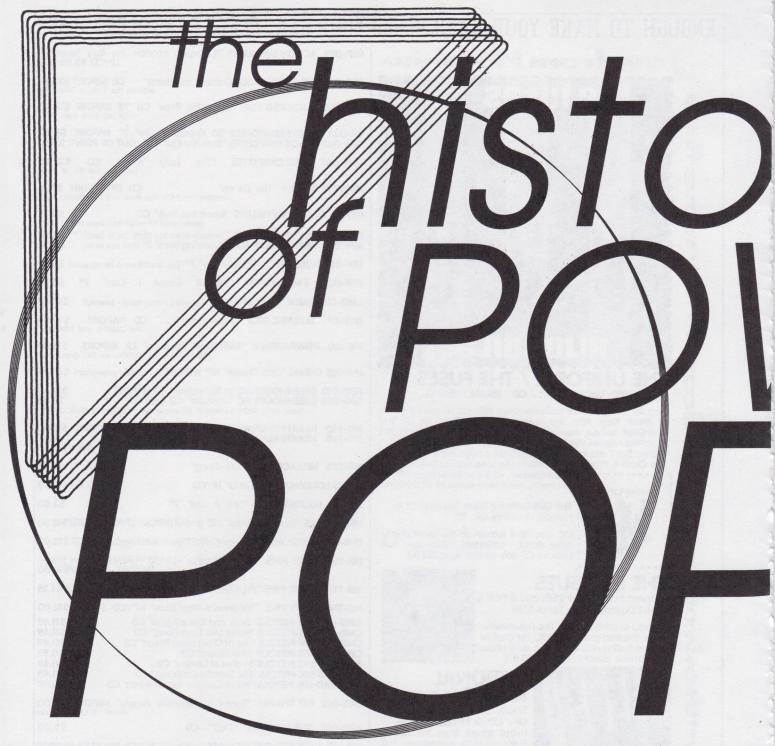
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o be perfectly honest, I'm a bit pissed off about the lack of respect that power pop gets.

Half of you probably think of power pop as a cheesy, lightweight, and insubstantial New Wave phenomenon—a campy trend, more or less. But you're wrong. Power pop is an enduring form of music that remains, to this day, undeniably relevant to rock 'n' roll.

I love power pop, and I'm not ashamed to admit it. As far as I'm concerned, power pop is the most deliciously sublime form of music ever created. And yes, power pop is a topic worthy of coverage, even in this magazine dedicated to the celebration of aggressive rock 'n' roll music. If you doubt that assertion, dear rockers, please read on. I shall prove the worthiness of power pop to even the most virile of you heavy-duty, macho, aggro rock 'n' roll mavens.

"Power pop" must be one of the most frequently-abused terms in all of rock journalism. On many occasions, I have seen fanzines and rock mags use the words power pop to describe wimpy indie pop, flaccid college rock, cheesy "melodic punk", paint-by-numbers formula pop-punk, and punchless soft rock. Ignore such wretched abuses of

the English language, dear friends. Power pop is such an undeniably cool term that countless bands (who are by no means real power pop bands) can't help but try to co-opt the term in a shameless attempt to earn credibility. But when terms are used incorrectly, they begin to lose their meaning. And I, the great lover of power pop, am not prepared to sit back passively and watch a bunch of pathetically inept hack bands steal the words "power pop" from the truly deserving. No way! Power pop posers will not be tolerated in this writer's world.

So now that I've told you what power pop

by josh rutledge

isn't, I suppose I should tell you what it is. So here we go: power pop is an energetic, loud, spirited mutation of 6o's-style pop that marries heavy guitars and powerful drumbeats with tasty melodies, gorgeous harmonies, and perfect hooks. Power pop seems almost like a musical contradiction, in that it's soft but hard, pretty yet tough. But in truth it represents the best of both worlds, as it brings together pop's sweetness and rock's aggressive energy.

Twenty-one years ago, the legendary fanzine *Bomp* ran a cover story hailing "powerpop" as a sound of great relevance to the

underground. That zine defined powerpop as a "hybrid style" that combined the guts of punk with the melodic songwriting craft of more widely-appealing 60's pop. Over two decades later, power pop is alive and welland still kicking hard-throughout the underground. Worldwide, bands like the Yum Yums (Norway), Psychotic Youth (Sweden), the Cheeks (Germany), the Figgs (USA), and Pat Dull And His Media Whores (USA) have put out absolutely fantastic records in recent years that have been every bit as good as the best power pop records of the late 70s and early 8os. And while dozens of bands did indeed try to cash in on power pop's explosive popularity in the early 80s, the subgenre itself has endured to the point where numerous underground bands continue exist for one reason and one reason only—to write killer pop songs and play them with energy! No band will ever get rich playing power pop today, but it's a style of music with an appeal that transcends simple economics.

Few other musical movements in history have produced so many musical treasures whilst receiving so little critical respect.

Some snobs might argue that power pop has never been anything more than ear candy. Even if one assumes for the moment that this is the case, does that make the musical achievements of the likes of Cheap Trick and Stiv Bators any less impressive? Ear candy or not, a great record is still a great record. There is something to be said for the art of



the kinks

the great pop song. To write a truly great pop song is no easy task. To make that pop song really rock is an even harder task. And while most critics may look back on power pop as having been mildly entertaining and amusing, it seems to me that the sub-genre deserves much more credit.

It would be impossible for me to write a thorough history of power pop in one midlength article, since one could literally write several books about the subject. What I intend to do here is provide a general overview of the early days of power pop. I'm not going to take up space discussing too many obscurities, but am instead going to concentrate on the sub-genre's classics (just as I would focus on the likes of Chopin and Schubert if I were going to write on the Romantic period of classical music).

So where should I start? With Big Star? The Raspberries? Badfinger? No! I'm going all the way back to the roots of power pop, baby! If you want to talk about the history of punk, you have to start—at the very least! with the Stooges and the MC5. So how can I write about the history of power pop and not begin with the band that started it all, the mighty Kinks? The Kinks can arguably be considered the greatest band in the history of rock 'n' roll, although their body of work eventually transcended the style of their early powerhouse pop anthems. But even if we assume that those early tunes were just a "good start", what a start it was! The Beatles may have perfected the art of the pop song in the early 60s, but Ray Davies and the Kinks took the pop song and made it rock! The band's third single, "You Really Got Me", must have blown the minds of young rock fans in 1964! The song's roaring buzzsaw guitar riff, heavy-duty beat, and glorious hooks must have sent shock waves throughout the bedrooms of merry olde England, and the single rapidly shot to #1 on the British pop charts. Here was a band that was playing virile pop music that made Lennon and McCartney sound like sissies. The raw energy and driving power of "You Really Got Me" had never been heard in a pop song before. One could argue that no pop band has ever surpassed this song in terms of its delightful combination of melody and might. "You Really Got Me" remains the one song that started it all, the model power pop song for the ages. (By the way, there's a nasty rumor floating around that Jimmy Page played the guitar solo on "You Really Got Me". But Mike Faloon, a fellow pop fanzine writer, assures me that the rumor is untrue and that Dave Davies did indeed play that solo.) The Kinks followed "You Really Got Me" with the explosive "All Day And All Of The Night", another catchy rocker that hit #2 on the UK charts. The stage was therefore set.

If I mention the Kinks, I also have to mention the Who. Inspired by the Kinks, the Who quickly emerged as the loudest rock band known to humanity. And if "You Really Got Me" was the song that created the blueprint for all power pop songs to follow, the Who's "I Can't Explain" was the first killer "You Really Got Me" rip-off. You should be vaguely familiar with the early days of the Who, so I probably don't have to tell you how ferocious a drummer Keith Moon was or how formidable a guitar player Pete Townshend was. To use the vernacular of today's young rock fans, Townshend and Moon simply "kicked ass" more than any guitar/drum duo in history. "I Can't Explain", a simple, hard-edged, driving pop anthem, put the Who on the rock 'n' roll map in 1965. Produced by Shel Talmy, the studio genius behind "You Really Got Me", the song was both undeniably catchy and unbelievably ferocious. It rocked like a monster, with a power riff for the ages (a riff that was later imitated by too many punk bands to mention) and a splendid chorus with thick, succulent harmonies! More infectious rockers followed, and the influence of "The Kids Are Alright" and 1966's "Substitute" on punk rock and power pop would later prove to be pervasive. In fact, Pete Townshend first used the term "power pop" in 1966 to describe his own band's music. Obviously he was a man who was ahead of his time.

By 1967, both the Kinks and the Who had moved on, leaving their power pop roots in the dust and creating more mature, sophisticated records that built on their early work. In retrospect, such evolutions were essential. But while power pop may have just been a developmental phase for the Who and Kinks, the sub-genre made a return years later in the form of 60's-inspired bands who were determined to make the style an enduring one. The power pop of the 70s was often Beatles-inspired, but it owed as much to the driving riffs of the Kinks and the Who as it did to the pleasing Beatle-esque melodies. America's Big Star became an underground rock staple, with their direct, jangly guitar pop, but it was the Raspberries who truly kicked off the full-blown power pop movement. Formed from the ashes of the Choir in 1970, the Raspberries may have seemed like an amusing novelty in the early 70s. At a time when simple 60's pop seemed to be passe, the Raspberries revived the melodic pleasures of British Invasion pop music. And they did so with a twist, since they rocked.

Raspberries Wally Bryson, Dave Smalley, and Jim Bonfanti had all been in the Choir, an obscure Ohio pop band that had mild success in the summer of 1967 with the classic "It's Cold Outside" (a song made even more legendary by Stiv Bators' cover version over a

decade later), which hit #68 on the American charts at a time when simple pop was no longer in favor. Eric Carmen, who had fronted Choir rivals Cyrus Erie, started the Raspberries with Bonfanti. With Carmen and Bryson singing and playing guitar, the Raspberries had two able songwriters. And their talents were not wasted, as the band exploded onto the American pop music scene with the red-hot single "Go All The Way" in 1972. This record was a smash, hitting #5 on the charts and injecting some much needed pop fun into American rock. I still get excited when I hear "Go All The Way" come on the radio! It opens with a bang, unleashing a furious, heavy, monster guitar riff before giving way to a sugary verse punctuated by Carmen's sweet tenor. With matching outfits and a "nice boy" image, the Raspberries may have seemed a little silly. But their songs endured.

Although the early Raspberries tended to remind people of the Beatles, the band had its hard-rocking moments ("I Wanna Be With You", the lead track off the band's second album, "Fresh", is one of the crunchiest power pop tunes of all time). Then the band went on to record what was perhaps the firstever genuine power pop album, 1973's "Side Three". The newer, louder Raspberries did not meet with much commercial success, but the album yielded the powerful classics "Tonight" and "Ecstasy". When Bonfanti and Smalley left the band, Carmen and Bryson kept the Raspberries together for one more LP, 1974's "Starting Over". This final LP was a bit more ambitious than previous Raspberries albums, and the critics loved it. The hit single "Overnight Sensation" put the band back near the top of the charts, but that song turned out to be their last hurrah. Carmen went on to a solo career that established him as a soft rock/adult contemporary favorite, so it seems that the Raspberries' break-up was a timely one. Few power pop bands have ever been able to sustain long careers. This isn't surprising, since as a band gets older it certainly can't keep making the same record again and again. Aging power pop bands have three choices: break-up, evolve, or sell out. The Raspberries took option #1.

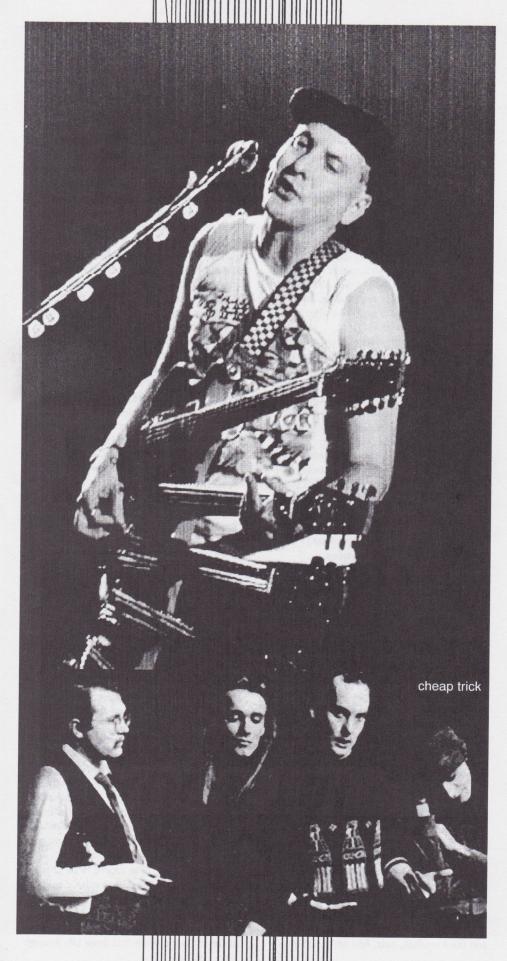
The early-to-mid 70s produced perhaps the greatest power pop band of all-time, the mighty Cheap Trick. Those of you laughing right now obviously have no clue about pop music history. If you only know of Cheap Trick from their sad, late 80's sellout days, you may be unaware of the band's unsurpassed late 70's greatness. In terms of quality, I'll put the first three Cheap Trick albums up against any 70's band's best three albums, and that includes the offerings by the Clash and the Ramones, pals. And while 60's pop

had a great influence on Cheap Trick, the band's music transcended the Raspberries' simple neo-6o's pop-rock style. Rick Nielsen, Cheap Trick's guitarist, was a brilliant songwriter who crafted smart, funny, rocking songs that were far more sophisticated than typical pop revivalist tunes.

Nielsen was actually a 60's rock veteran, having already played with Tom Petersson in an obscure band called Fuse. In 1973, Nielsen and Petersson formed Cheap Trick with drummer Bun E. Carlos. When singer Robin Zander joined the band a year later, the classic Cheap Trick lineup was set. Zander's smooth, clear voice proved to be the perfect complement to Nielsen's hard-hitting riffs, and Cheap Trick spent the years 1974-76 on the road, opening up for a variety of "arena rock" acts and quickly developing into an exciting live band. They were a loud, raucous "rock" outfit that played clever, hook-laden pop songs, and their self-titled 1977 debut LP is a true classic. Here was a band that everyone could like—hard rock fans loved the band's guitar power, and pop purists fell for its perfect tunes. Their first album opens with the dynamic, powerful "Hot Love" and never lets up, pairing Zander's tremendous vocal range with his backing band's killer rhythms and powerhouse riffs. It's a dark, funny, electrifying album that offers a tremendous variety of aural delights. "He's A Whore" and "Elo Kiddies" are perfect catchy rockers, whereas "Speak Now Or Forever Hold Your Peace" and "Oh Candy" are glorious, poignant pop songs.

The superb "In Color", Cheap Trick's second LP, lacked the heavy punch of its predecessor, but it quickly became a pop classic ("Downed" and "Oh Caroline" are certainly two of the best pop songs of the 70s). 1978's "Heaven Tonight" was a blend of the rock power of the band's first LP and the pop sweetness of their second. "Surrender" was a minor hit in America. More importantly, it was a perfect power pop song, an energetic, delightful rock tune that went down in history. "Surrender" is to power pop what "Sonic Reducer" is to punk—an anthem for all eras! But great as it was, it wasn't able to turn Cheap Trick into rock superstars during the height of the disco era. It wasn't until the release of the band's live LP, "At Budokan", that Cheap Trick found itself in favor with the masses. A heavier live version of "In Color"'s poppy "I Want You To Want Me" even managed to zoom into the Top 10.

Commercial success proved to be Cheap Trick's undoing, at least in an artistic sense. The band's fourth studio LP, "Dream Police", went triple-platinum. But Cheap Trick never again matched the sheer power and delightful melodicism of their first three LPs (though



they came close on 1983's Todd Rundgrenproduced "Next Position Please"). Cheap Trick was not immune to the downward spiral that swallows up successful rock bands, and that descent reached ridiculous extremes with 1988's unbearable smash hit ballad, "The Flame". But let's not dwell on the negative here. To this day, Cheap Trick remains one of the most beloved live rock acts around, and few bands in rock history can boast of an early discography as impressive as the one they produced. You simply can't talk about power pop without talking about Cheap Trick.

While Cheap Trick eventually sold millions of records and reached a mass audience, the Nerves built up their legend on a completely underground level. The Nerves are a power pop band that trendy critics like to talk about, but they aren't a band that a whole lot of people have actually heard. This shortlived mid-70's California band left behind only one record, 1976's "The Nerves" EP. And while power pop collector geeks are still willing to kill to obtain this 4-song classic, the Nerves' legacy is primarily derived from underground folklore. With a trio of ace songwriters (Jack Lee, Paul Collins, and Peter Case) in the band, the Nerves had the kind of talent that made power pop as fantastic in reality as it is was in theory. The "you had to be there" cliché (applied to nearly every great band that breaks up before their time) certainly applies to the Nerves, whose involvement in the early LA punk scene played just as big a role in their fame as their one 7" did.

The Nerves' own earthquake may have been a tiny one, but the aftershocks of it exerted a great deal of influence on power pop's glory years: Blondie covered the band's classic tune, "Hanging On The Telephone" on their wonderful "Parallel Lines" LP, and Nerves' Paul Collins and Peter Case went on to achieve semi-fame in the ensuing years. Collins formed the Beat after the Nerves' 1978 breakup, while Case formed the Plimsouls that same year (The equally talented Jack Lee released one solo LP that failed to make any commercial impact.) The Beat was the more straight-ahead pop-oriented of the two bands, and their 1979 self-titled debut LP is one of the finest long-players in power pop history. Songs like "Walking Out On Love" and "Different Kind Of Girl" delivered beautiful hooks along with raunchy guitars. The Plimsouls blended pop with a rootsy rock 'n' roll attack, but songs like "Zero Hour" (the title track to the band's first EP, released in 1980) and "Now" were pure pop gems. Like the Beat, the Plimsouls managed to release one excellent LP, and then called it quits after a second, more lackluster fulllength effort. Both bands were done by 1983

(although the Plimsouls recently reappeared with none other than Blondie's Clem Burke on drums), but they packed a lot of thrills into their brief existences. No power pop compilation tape is complete without the inclusion of the Beat's fabulous "Rocknroll Girl" and the Plimsouls' mega-hit "A Million Miles Away".

Years before power pop had its day in the sun as far as commercial success was concerned, the American midwest was a power pop goldmine. Illinois' Shoes formed in 1975 and stuck to a basic Beatle-esque attack that helped make the band's 1976 debut LP, "Black Vinyl Shoes", such a delight. The selfreleased album resulted in a single on Bomp! Records, which in turn helped land Shoes a deal with Elektra Records. Shoes went on to produce several fine LPs, but they were unable to find commercial success (they did, however, land in heavy rotation on a fledgling network called MTV in the very early 80s). Michigan's Romantics, however, did make it big with a classic power pop sound. Formed in 1977, these rockers from Detroit made two of the most essential power pop albums ever-1979's self-titled debut, and 1980's "National Breakout". Like Cheap Trick, the Romantics played pop tunes that rocked hard. 90% of today's so-called "punk" bands can only dream of the sort of loud, aggressive guitar sound capable of matching the roar of the Romantics' own. These two albums are perfect examples of what power pop should sound like, with a raw, heavy guitar blast and ferocious drums driving hard to the tune of pretty pop songs. Everyone has probably heard the legendary "What I Like About You", but "When I Look In Your Eyes", "Tell It To Carrie", and "Girl Next Door" are just as good. Dressed on the cover of their debut LP in matching red leather jackets and skinny ties, the Romantics looked like an even cooler version of the Raspberries. But the record was much more than just a fashion statement-it was power pop perfection. Certified gems like "Tomboy" and "Take Me Out Of The Rain" made "National Breakout" an equally essential power pop classic. A horrible cock rock production made the band's third LP, "Strictly Personal", sound like cheesy AOR radio fodder, and 1983's "In Heat" was a shameless stab at commercial acceptance ("Talking In Your Sleep" became a monster radio hit in America). But as was the case with most other classic power pop bands, the Romantics' early greatness easily atones for their eventual musical degenera-

While bands like the Romantics may have tasted a bit of commercial success, power pop was more about music than it was about record sales in the mid-to-late 70s. That is also the case today, as only "indie" labels are

responsible for keeping the music in circulation. While do-it-yourself labels are a dime a dozen today, the concept of a DIY label was practically unheard of when Bomp! Records was born in 1974. At the time, Bomp's Greg Shaw met up with the Flamin' Groovies, who were looking for a label to release their "You Tore Me Down" single. Although Shaw didn't really have any idea of how to go about releasing a record, he decided that if no one else was going to put out that Groovies' record, he would. He surely had no idea at the time that he was starting what would become a truly legendary label. As a popular and successful fanzine publisher, Shaw had connections to underground radio and an audience for his bands. While the commerical rock of the 70s was in a sad state, Bomp did

its part to put the fun

back in rock 'n' roll by releasing a large variety of rock 'n' roll, garage, pop, and punk records. And while the label's roster was quite diverse, it's hard to talk about early power pop without mentioning Bomp Records. A list of bands who appeared on Bomp releases reads like a who's who of classic power pop: Paul Collins, Shoes, the Romantics, the Plimsouls, 20/20, Nikki And The Corvettes, the Last, the Flashcubes, etc.

But it was the solo career of ex-Dead Boy Stiv Bators that truly put Bomp in the power pop Hall of Fame.
While you are probably all aware of Bators' role in punk history, you may not

be aware of the fact that he is just as important of a figure in power pop history.
Following the Dead Boys' 1979 breakup,
Bators decided to head in a new musical direction, one that would allow him to revisit the glorious, sweet pop ethos of the mid60s. He decided to work with Bomp because of that label's power pop reputation, and the resulting collaboration was truly a match made in heaven. More so than any artist in history, Bators represented the power pop ideal as expressed in the pages of Bomp, that perfect mixture of punk attitude and pop melody. Bators' solo material was crunchy, driving, and melodious. While punk rock and

power pop are two completely different things, Bators single-handedly forged a marriage between them. His first single was fronted by a cover of the Choir's legendary tune, "It's Cold Outside"; this was one of the greatest pop songs ever written, and Bators' treatment of it was splendid. A perfect original on the flipside, "The Last Year", made this debut single one of 1980's most remarkable records. The only reason I can't say it's the best power pop single of all time is because Bators' second single was even better. I challenge anyone to name one single in pop music history with two songs more delightful than "Not That Way Anymore" and "Circumstantial Evidence"! These two singles were more than amazing, as they were both delightful and powerful. Bators' 1980 LP, "Disconnected", proved that he could

tured
ace songwriters
such as bassist Frank
Secich and drummer David
Quinton. Perfect pop gems like
Secich's "Evil Boy" and Quinton's
"Make Up Your Mind" were marvelous-tasting ear candies, but Stiv
was no one-dimensional act. The more
complex, emotionally stirring "A
Million Miles Away" and a great
cover of "I Had Too Much To Dream"
revealed the great sensitivity and

power in Bators' voice. After the

release of this remarkable album,

perhaps the greatest power pop

album ever recorded!, Bators

master both simple power

pop and more sophis-

ticated material.

went off to form the Wanderers.
Like all the best power pop
careers, Bators' was a short
and sweet one. If you don't
own his first two fabulous singles, seek out the "L.A., L.A."
bllects some of Bators' finest solo

CD, which collects some of Bators' finest solo material. It's worth owning just to hear "Not That Way Anymore", possibly the catchiest pop song ever.

As a lover of power pop, I can't help but feel ambivalent about the success of the Knack. On the one hand, The Knack's commercial breakthrough put power pop on the map at a national level and allowed dozens of other power pop bands the opportunity to take their music to the masses. On the other hand, bands and labels looking to cash-in on the Knack's immense success were hardly exemplifying the true spirit of pop music. One could say that Knack-mania signified

- Table of

stiv bators

both a new beginning and an end of commercial power pop. Once various bands' focusses shifted from writing good songs to making money, they were doomed to make bad records. But one thing is for sure—there was nothing suspect about the Knack's first LP, the amazing "Get The Knack". To this day, I still can't get enough of it.

The Knack formed in Los Angeles in 1978, and it didn't take them long to stir up a great deal of interest all over California. Guitarists/songwriters Doug Fieger and Berton Averre drew from the best of 60's pop as they crafted infectious tunes with irresistible melodies. The band's loud, high-energy live show caused them to pack clubs all over California. Less than a year after their formation, the Knack found itself in the midst of a heavy-duty major label bidding war. Thirteen labels made a pitch for the Knack, and Capitol Records ended up winning out. After signing to Capitol, the band recorded "Get The Knack" in just seventeen days. The album, which cost only \$17,000 to make, gave Capitol a huge return on its investment. "Get The Knack" soared to #1 on the American charts, and it took only six weeks for the album to reach platinum status. "My Sharona" not only hit #1 on the US charts, but also ended the year as the most popular song of 1979. A second single, "Good Girls Don't", hit the Top 10 later in 1979. And what a great album "Get The Knack" was! It's no-frills production merely accentuated the greatness of Fieger and Averre's addictive, hard-edged pop-rock tunes. "My Sharona" and "Good Girls Don't" were the hits, but "Oh Tara", "That's What The Little Girls Do", and "Your Number Or Your Name" could have also been huge hits. It's hard to believe that a record so good could have been so popular. It's obvious that times have changed in the commercial music industry.

The Knack were never able to match the success of their first LP. The band's second LP, "But The Little Girls Understand", was an artistic and commercial disappointment. And one week after the 1981 release of the band's third LP, "Round Trip", the Knack were history (though the band eventually reunited). By that time, the ephemeral power pop craze in commercial rock was drawing its last few breaths. And while several of the bands that met with commercial approval during the height of power pop's popularity were fantastic bands, such as 20/20, the Records, and the Vapors. many others were not. As Greg Shaw once said, his beloved "powerpop" began as primarily an underground sound, but it was later co-opted by shallow New Wave bands looking to exploit a trend.

Twenty years later, the idea that any power pop record could be "commercially viable" seems laughable. That just goes to show you how dramatically Top 40 radio has deteriorated in the last two decades. If Top 40 radio was doing its job, great songs would still be reaching the masses. But sadly, commercial radio is the last place where one nowadays expects to hear good pop songs. I pity the kids who are growing up with Limp Bizkit and Korn. Their lives must be hellatious. even if they don't realize it! Even the most tolerable radio pop acts today pale in comparison to the power pop acts of yesteryear. Can anyone honestly tell me that the Goo Goo Dolls and Green Day are even half as good as Cheap Trick and the Knack? Catchy choruses, memorable hooks, and glorious harmonies were once the basis of commercial acceptance. Now, curiously, they belong to the underground.

Power pop didn't die in the 80's, but it never again found itself in the commercial limelight. The fact that the sub-genre has endured for so long is proof of its great virtues. Bands have continued to write great songs and play them with energy and aggression. Power pop lives in 1999, and it will still be alive in 2019. Trends come and go, but great songs are timeless.





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HIT SQUAD

oing a zine sucks.

First and most important, it doesn't get you laid. Hell, even the roadie of a semi-lame band probably gets more action than a zine publisher. Women will not even look interested when you tell them you write for *Flipside* (who?) and *Hit List* (who?), and they yawn when you explain that you also publish something called a "Censor This". Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying that bands have it cushy - on the contrary. It is heartbreaking to watch good bands get ignored by both media and fans, while some lame, derivative bunch of ex-metalheads or ex-funk/rap fucks get thousands of adoring fans, tons of pussy, and all the press they can eat (can you say GOLDFINGER and LIMP BIZKIT?). It's just that zine people have it even worse!

Then there are the long hours. How many nights in a row do I sit at my computer, retyping hand-scrawled, illegible ravings? Or nearly as bad, reformatting and correcting the spelling of the digital submissions? I imagine that it's sort of like being a junior high (middle school) English teacher - except that the hours are longer and I don't get to give anyone an "F" for "Fuckin' Idiot". At least a teacher gets paid to correct other people's work. I do okay, and try to get at least 6 hours sleep during crunch time. Cathy Rundell of the now defunct Fiz(z) magazine would get more like 4 hours a night. Up at Flipside it's not uncommon for Al and/or whoever is working there (Todd at the moment) to pull all-nighter's, or even to stay up for several days in a row. Todd drinks a lot of coffee.

Reviewing records is the worst time consumer of all. Unlike

some reviewers, I actually listen to records all the way through, sometimes more than once! But of course certain bands still write/call to bitch about bad reviews, sometimes even about reviews which other people wrote, as if you're expected to correct their perception of the record without ever having heard the damned thing!

That leads directly to the subject of abuse and harassment. Never give out your home phone number, because all the bands and labels in the world will call you with their pleas and demands. "Interview our band!", they whine at 120 decibels. Then, when you do interview them to make them shut up, they act like they did YOU a favor, or even bitch at you (which is why I refuse to cover UXA anymore.



Susie's cool, but that De De Troit! Gah! In the words of Monty Python: "Run away! Run away!"). Bands will call begging you to attend their show - an hour's drive away. They don't care that you have to rise at 6 AM the next morn-

ing and do the zombie all day at your regular job. Labels will pull all sorts of tricks, too. They'll expect you to run free ads in your zine. Or they'll demand that you run ads "in exchange" for the CDs they send for review, and get all snotty when you explain that you have to pay for printing (which is why I refuse to give any coverage to Larry's old label, Lookout). Or they'll expect you to interview their bands in exchange for ads (hi, Taang!), then will only take out ads in that particular issue! On other occasions they'll call or write to ask if you received their CD/promo package, and act offended when you have no idea what they're talking about and get irritated about the call (hello, Mighty Recording Corp, kissed my ass lately?). They get offended, as if it's all your fault and not theirs. (If any labels are reading this, let me give you a few words of advice: NEVER make follow-up calls, I don't give a shit what they told you in your corporate sales training seminars. A follow-up call is guaranteed to annoy a zine publisher and is a good way to get your product blacklisted and returned to a music store for a buck or two, not reviewed.)

Then there's the neglect. Zine contributors are almost always late with their submissions. In response, many (most!) zine

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HIT SQUAD



editors lie about when their actual deadlines are - they have to, or the issues won't get printed! Late isn't so bad - even I'm late occasionally (as with this column, because I've been devoting all my attention to a novel I've been writing), but the worst type of neglect is the promised piece which somehow never gets submitted. Some people promise to write wonderful articles that make you salivate all over yourself like a rabid Pavlov's dog, but then you never hear another word from that person. Ever. Labels promise to send ads

w/a check, and it never arrives, making you scramble to scrape up money and/or fill that half-page space you set aside for them.

Doesn't publishing a zine sound like fun?

Writing for a zine has its wonderful aspects also. You get to express your opinions. Then people who disagree will do everything possible to make you look like an idiot by surgically dissecting your words with all the precision of a gas spectrometer (damn, but I love a mixed metaphor, nyah!) analysis. I don't know about you, but I sometimes fail to express myself as clearly as I would like, thereby leaving myself vulnerable to attack. A few issues back something I said set off fellow

zinester Mykel Board. He really laid into me, so much so that it seems like I must have stepped on the toes of one of his sacred cows. In the first place he took offense at my calling abortion "killing a baby." Okay, I will freely admit that I am not absolutely certain when the developing fetus stops being a fetus and becomes a human being, a baby. Is it conception? Probably not. Is it only when the fetus leaves the womb in one piece, alive? Maybe not. Try this: if it's viable enough at eight months to be born and survive as a human being, then what about a "partial the abortion" where the fetus is killed in the womb hefere extraction.

birth abortion" where the fetus is killed in the womb before extraction? Is that murder? And how can we be sure? I'm honest enough to admit that I'm not sure at what point a fetus crosses over into being human. I wonder if Mykel is equally honest? Or do you have it figured out, Mykel? Do you know at what point a fetus stops being a fetus and becomes a human being? If so, please share it with us, but be sure to include the medical data that support your opinion. I'd be fascinated to see it.

As for what Mykel described as "sloppy thinking", it's not sloppy to admit that I'm not certain at exactly what point a fetus becomes a baby. It's called intellectual honesty, Mykel. You pointed out in your letter that "The only legitimate argument in the abortion debate is whether or not the fetus is human." May I amend that slightly and

ask at what precise point does the fetus become human? I don't think abortions should be done when no one really knows for certain if the entity which is being aborted is a human being or not - but neither do I want pro-lifers to enforce their extreme view that all abortion is murder. What I want to know is when the fetus becomes a baby. Understand now? I suspect - but it's only a suspicion, mind you, because I have no proof - that a freshly fertilized egg isn't human and that aborting one isn't really murder. I also suspect that aborting a viable fetus after eight or nine months of development IS murder.

As for your kind offer to shove barbed wire up my ass as an example of the sort of immorality that should be prevented by the cops, I don't think you would be safe trying to do that. I wouldn't need the cops, 'cause I'm bigger than you are, Mykel.

Therefore, I would suggest that the crossover point lies somewhere in between those two termini (but of course I failed to make all this clear in my article, darn it! And I thought the article would fly solely on the strong sense of irony it displayed! Not in the slag-a-minute world of punk zine writing, apparently). And if it is somewhere in between, exactly where is it? I suspect that it's early, but to be honest I'm not really sure. Have you got the data, Mykel? Cough it up!

As for your kind offer to shove barbed wire up my ass as an example of the sort of immorality that should be prevented by the cops, I don't think you would be safe trying to do that. I

wouldn't need the cops, 'cause I'm bigger than you are, Mykel. Ignoring the personal aspect of this debate (Really, can't you debate this subject without getting personal? Bad form, Mykel!), what I was trying to communicate about the pro-lifers was that they were attempting to enforce their narrow, not generally accepted, and still debatable religious-based morality by getting the government to ban abortion completely. One can at least make a case for the right of the fetus to live if it's defined as human, but opposed to this right is the right of women to control her own bodies. Pro-lifers should not ignore the rights of these women unless they can demonstrate scientifically that a fetus is a human being.

In short, abortion is not a clear-cut issue because we don't really know for sure when a fetus becomes human. Hence I cannot be clear about it either! So if it sounds like I'm on both sides of the debate at the same time, maybe it's because I have to be on both sides - to be otherwise is intellectually dishonest. And reflective of sloppy thinking.

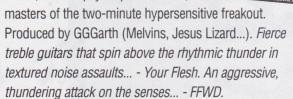
So when are you going to start contributing to *Hit List*, Mykel? You're a damned good writer, not to mention a cantankerous bastard, so why not join us?

-ShitEd, Tujungatrashland, Californication

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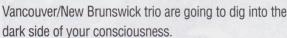
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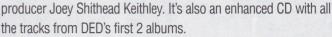
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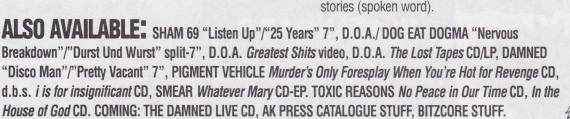




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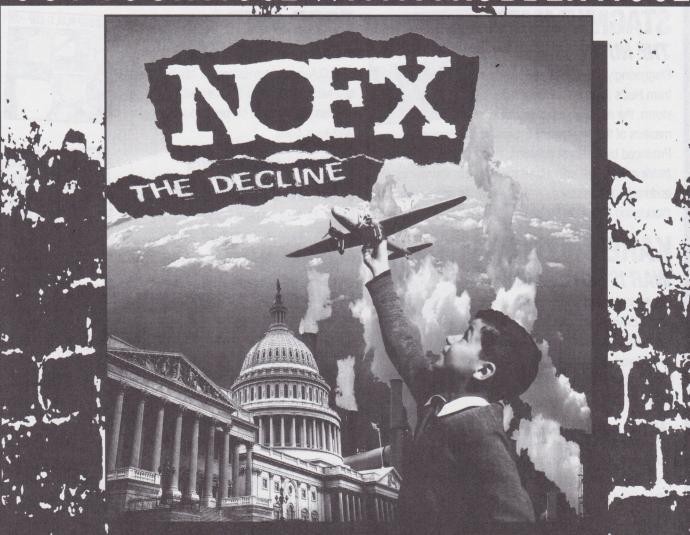


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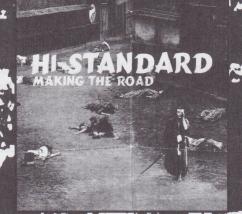


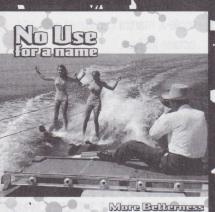
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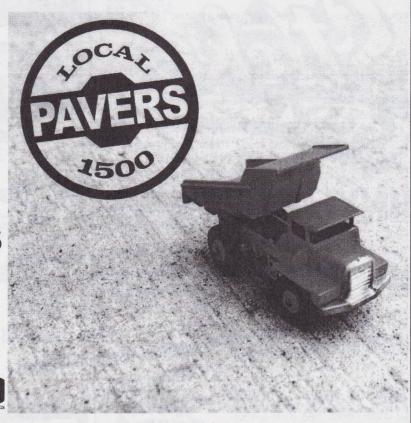
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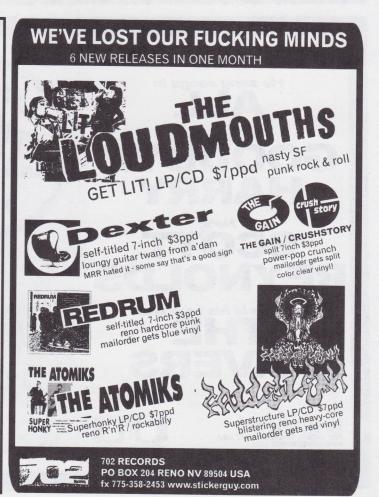
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THE LADONNAS



1011

HIT SQUAD

ne time I was in a dangerous spy plot.
Years ago I was at a punk rock hangout house a few doors down from #1 Chinese in Albany, NY. Most of the evening had been spent reducing my brain, with bong hits, to such a state that when the agent handed me a pill, I couldn't even tell what type of pill it was. Too bad I didn't see who gave it to me; the anonymity of that agent has been preserved to this day.

Waves of STONEDNESS were overtaking me anyway, and soon the pill was a distant memory. In fact, most everything was a distant memory except #1 Chinese which, I was suddenly aware, was right down the street. I needed to get out anyway, because the air in there wasn't doing me any good and they had mind control stuff in it.

The Chinese place had a really funny smell to it, like Chinese food but more evil. The music was selected from the "James Bond Mind Control Series, Volume 3: Fucking with Your Subject After Drugging Them". It was Chinese lounge music, like Frank Sinatra on the Mandarin tip, and it was FREAKING ME OUT.

The walls of the restaurant were hellishly greasy and covered with pin-up girlie calendars. These were similar to the Snap-On calendars you see at auto repair joints, where naked chicks are pictured holding a wrench or an oil filter. These women weren't holding any tools because the calendars were from Chinese food supply companies. Between the weird music and the smell, the place was bothering me more and more every minute. I was sure that this was the headquarters for some serious spy shit but was unwilling to show weakness by leaving, so I stood my ground and waited for my order.

Finally the food was ready and the guy was bringing it to the counter, but I was feeling REALLY funny. At first it was a bout of nausea, then there was dizziness, and the ringing in my head had increased to an unbearable level. I cast about looking for help, but the naked Chinese women on the walls simply mocked me, their mouths gaping in twisted leers as I fell.

I awoke lying on my back on the dirty floor, with the Chinese agents standing over me silently. They were still dressed as restaurant workers, and they were staring at me. I didn't know if I could stand up, but tried anyway. Slowly I made it to my feet and turned to face the counter, and the agents resumed their charade of "cooking."

All at once it hit me that I had just passed out on the floor and was now about to start sputtering incoherently in the direction of a person who barely spoke English. I just wanted to GET THE FUCK OUT OF THERE, so I reached for my wallet...only to find that it wasn't there. I panicked momentarily, thinking that someone had taken it. Fortunately I had the minimal presence of mind to look behind me on the floor, where the wallet lay undisturbed.

I paid for my food and tore ass out of #1 Chinese, and I've never been back. The place remains a stronghold for some heavy spy-type shit, and the scam with the pills continues to this day.



Paranoid delusions notwithstanding, I actually DO have some legitimate curiosities about western-style Chinese restaurants.

For example, when people open a Chinese restaurant in the US, are they coming from a restaurant background in China? Is it possible for Chinese chefs to specialize in "Western-style" cuisine in order to open a restaurant abroad? Or did the emigrants-

cum-restaurateurs have jobs as bookkeepers, clerks, construction workers, computer technicians, etc., before they opened a western-style Chinese joint? What gives with this phenomenon?

My friend Mike, who is offensive, helped shed a little light on that subject for me. I include his random statements because they are endearing.

"I dunno if you know it or not, but my brother is married to a 'chink' who is fresh off the boat. I don't mean that as a racial slur - I love her dearly - I just like to use racial slurs at will. As a result I've been exposed to all sorts of crazy ass Chinese cooking real CHINESE cooking, not Chinese-American shit.

IANevr

Their wedding reception consisted of a ten-course meal, and included such things as chicken's feet, jellyfish, lobster molds (a tough one to explain), and all sorts of other horrors....but tasty horrors nonetheless. And me, being a fan of cooking (as you can tell by my portly-ass self) and having almost enrolled in the CIA (the Culinary Institute of AmeriKKKa), I think I can best answer that question.

Chinese food as we know it is basically Chinese-American food. If you go to an authentic Chinese Restauraunt (like "Empire Szechuan" on the upper West Side or the "Peking Duck" on Mott Street in Chinatown), you'll notice that most of the items on a Chinese take-out menu don't appear at these places. Most of the foods in those take-out places are made for the average 'Joe 6-Pack', with some exceptions. For example, the General Tso's chicken/tofu is both a Szechuan and a Cantonese dish, and is served differently in both those areas of China.

But you get my drift...now, onto the answer. Basically, yes and no. You need to have a fundamental background in Chinese cooking, but the rest is basically from the generic "China King" cookbook. It's all the same recipes and shit, because they know what people will always buy and so will only serve those certain items. No one in their right mind would get a side order ofjellyfish, would they? I know i wouldn't..."[end indent]

That sort of cleared up my questions, but not completely. I'd still like to know how the move is usually made to emigrate to the US (or other western countries) and open a restaurant, and what really fascinates me is the CULTURE of Chinese emigration as it relates to western-style Chinese restaurants.

I'll have to look into that, but not with all these fucking secret agents around. I don't want to tip my hand. That would be foolish. We'll just make it my secret mission.

Don't tell anyone, or you're next with the pills.



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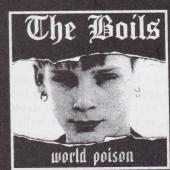


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HIT SQUAD

DOUBLESHOT

hat I'm about to reveal will change forever the way you watch TV. Once you've seen it once, you'll see it everywhere.

Everybody knows that the people on TV look dif-

Everybody knows that the people on TV look different from the rest of us. They are better looking. They have every good thing the world has to give, including, by the end of the commercial, whatever they're trying to sell you. Their hair is perfect. Their teeth gleam. But it goes further than that. One day I noticed that there were a tremendous number of redheads in TV advertising. Out on the street you might see a hundred white people before spotting a redhead. In TV ads it can be one in five or one in ten. Then I noticed something else. Of the African-Americans in ads, a tremendous number have very light skin ("high yellow"), far more than in the general population. Multiply one low probability by another and you get a very low probability that you would see a redhead and a high yellow in the same ad if the people in the ads, as the President might say, looked like America. I began to watch for this rarity, which should have been rarer still since I confined my research to female pairings.

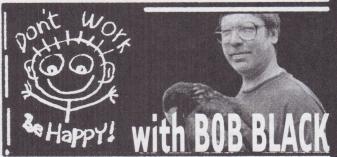
It turns out that, once you know what to look for, you can rarely get through a station break without what I call a *doubleshot*. Soon I wished I could close the doors of perception, lock them, and throw away the key. I felt like the Ray Milland character in *The Man with the X-Ray Eyes*, who went mad because he could see through everything, including his own eyelids. Is this what color TV was meant for?

The reader who thinks I'm bullshitting will learn otherwise, to his sorrow, the next time he watches TV. I can dramatize my discovery no better than by verifying my claim that there's a doubleshot ad for almost every product or service you might need or desire. Walk with me and see.

The day begins when the alarm clock rings (purchased at WARDS). You shower with DOVE, shampoo with CLAIROL, and brush your teeth with CREST. You put on the glasses you got from ANNE KLEIN EYEWARE and a suit from TALBOTS. You dab on a hint of LOREAL. You take VAL-

TREX for that condition you developed after a bout of unprotected sex and, to keep you regular, FIBERCON. After a strong cup of MAXWELL HOUSE coffee, you enjoy breakfast at APPLEBEE'S and proceed to work. Your employer is NEW YORK CONSUMERS FOR ECONOMIC COMPETITION, INC., a business lobby masquerading as a consumer group. The hardware you work with, from INTEL and GATEWAY, is state of the art. For lunch you have lots of choices: CHUCK E. CHEESE, RED LOBSTER, SUBWAY, OUTBACK STEAKHOUSE, etc.

Quitting time at last, and home you go. Since you aren't very hungry you just nibble on some TRISCUITS washed down by CRYSTAL LIGHT. Your mood is a little low: it's that time of the month (you prefer WINGS STAYFREE). The rug needs a going-over with your EUREKA but you're just not up for it tonight. For that matter, the kitchen needs a new coat of SHERWIN-WILLIAMS. Although it's probably not a good idea, you crack open a botHe of TURNING LEAF MERLOT. You even consider ringing up the PSYCHIC HOTLINE (through your long-distance provider SPRINT) but think better of it. You're already almost maxed out on your MASTERCARD, EQUITABLE has just jacked up



your insurance premium, and you're giving serious consideration to seeking credit counseling from GENUS CREDIT MANAGEMENT. But that decision is a headache to be put off to another day. You can put off

the decision, but you can't put off the headache, so you take a TYLENOL and go to sleep.

It's gone that far. From A to Z, ACCOLADE to ZENEKA PHARMA-CEUTICS, wherever you go, there they Separate sightings are still more numerous. It may well be that these casting decisions stem from market research as to the kind of people most people like to see on TV (not their own kind of people, apparently). Most people are losers and they know it. You can't use people like them to sell them

stuff because they'd never buy anything off people like themselves. One tried-and-true method of selling to the masses is by using celebrity salesmen from a life worlds removed from theirs, but, even aside from the labor costs, distance is what sustains celebrity: familiarity devalues it. To maximize the effectiveness of celebrity ads they must be kept scarce. The journeymen ad actors will have to come across as more familiar and accessible than the celestials but still superior to the normals-a better version of the viewers.

Although it's probably not a good idea, you crack open a bottle of TURNING LEAF MERLOT. You even consider ringing up the PSYCHIC HOTLINE (through your long-distance provider SPRINT) but think better of it.

HIT SQUAD



I'm talking about nothing but culturally conditioned self-perceptions of the body. The people in TV ads are the idealized versions of the people who are not. Madison Avenue's (and Hollywood's) preference for high yellows continues an old tradition among both blacks and whites of most highly esteeming the most white-looking of black women. At the same time, these light-skinned women are, after all, black as Americans reckon race. In a country like Brazil they would occupy a distinct racial category, but Americans of all races still cling to our ancient theory that anybody who appears to have or is known to have even a trace of African ancestry is black. So the darker African-Americans do not reject high yellows as members of their community, but they may envy them and are tempted to identify with them at least to the extent of heeding the advertising messages they present.

The explanation for TV advertising's fetish for redheads is not as obvious, but I think it's not too different in the long run. The axiom is the same: white is good and the whiter the better. Americans who now consider each other white (or so they say) haven't always been so sure who was white and who wasn't. In antebellum America, English-stock native-born Protestants seriously pondered whether Irish Catholics were white. Fifty years later, there was much doubt whether immigrants from Sicily and southern Italy were white. After all, most ostensibly white Americans have brown eyes, and an even higher proportion has brown

hair. That doesn't mean they're not white, but, after all, they could certainly look whiter, and looks are all that matter in the advertising context. Who, then, looks white to white people and even more reliably whiter than a lot of them do?

Redheads. Almost always they have blue (or green) eyes and fair complexions. Somebody might up and say that this is also true of blondes. Insofar as this is true, it further proves my point. Blondes are also a small minority of the white population, but more numerous than redheads, and vastly overrepresented in TV advertising. There may well have been a time when blondes dominated ads as redheads and high yellows do now. Maybe the admen overdid blondes at a time before political correctness pressured them into bringing in some blacks, and they turned to redheads as an alternative source of ultra-whiteness. I've carried this ball as far as I care to, somebody else is welcome to pick it up and run with it.

Fads usually run to extremes before they run their course, and the doubleshot craze is no exception. The ultimate doubleshot (whose premium status is marked by an asterisk) is the *hole in one*: an actress who is both a redhead and a high yellow. Examples include TRIDENT GUM* and M 'N' Ms*, but another example will end our excursion with sublime absurdity: the UNITED NEGRO COLLEGE FUND*!

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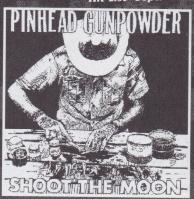
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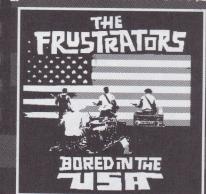
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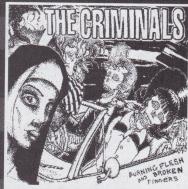


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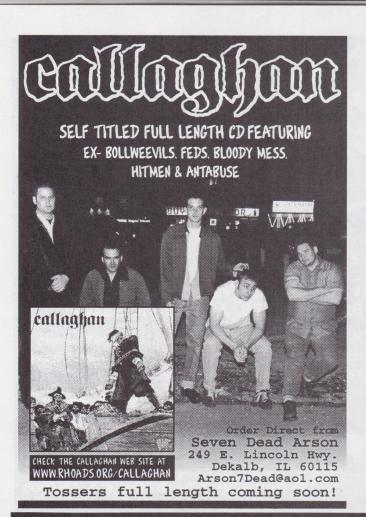
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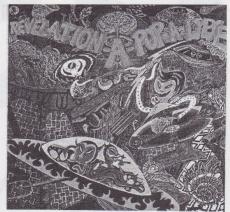




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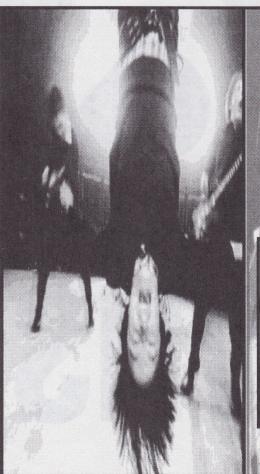
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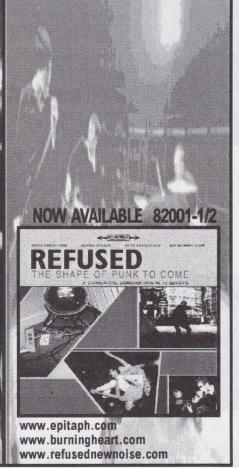
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DOWNS

he rock 'n' roll-crazed teen generation of the mid-1960's had it good. Real good. Just think...opportunities to see the Byrds or Yardbirds at a local high school gym, or seeing the Who when they still wrecked their instruments, plus catching these and other faves on TV-on "Shindig", "Hullabaloo", "Upbeat", or "Ed Sullivan", week after week. The Rolling Stones in mono. Question Mark & the Mysterians LP's for \$3.88! Teen rock mags for a quarter (presently appearing on eBay for \$75)!

For mid-sixties sound addicts coming of age in the awfully inferior three decades since, the ear-ringing chords, fuzztone, and snarl of the class of '66 has been primarily, almost solely, accessible by record. However, the equally

esterfield

important visual component seems reduced to photos and well-circulated (i.e., crummy quality) video tapes. As for seeing the Yardbirds or Byrds in person, well, at best that's the stuff of daydreams for a lot of us.

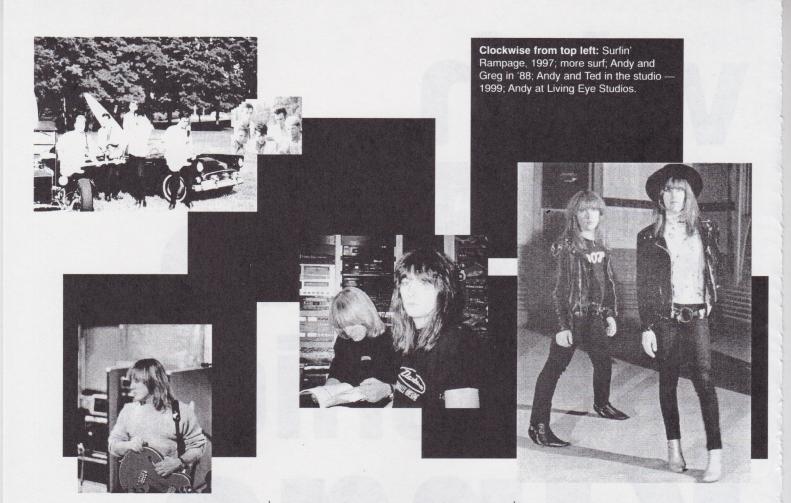
This lucky late bloomer would have to argue, though, that the full sight 'n' sound sixties experience continues in at least one isolated example, and has for two decades. Since 1979, the Chesterfield Kings have been wowing everyone but the masses with their totally inspired "Out Of Our Heads"/"Aftermath" assault. Their sound is pure, undistilled prepsychedelic rhythm 'n' raunch, their look a loud update of the early Stones. They should be superstars. Instead, they continue to confound both their fans and detractors with an

uncompromising stance and an arrogance unusual even by true punk standards.

Their unique vision has in recent years guided the Chesterfield Kings toward such unlikely recording detours as a quasi-tribute LP of Stones-related experiments, "Let's Go Get Stoned" (Mirror Records, 1994) and an ambitious double-LP surf sendup, "Surfin' Rampage" (Mirror, '97). However, it's their latest longplay that is commanding the most attention yet, the triumphant return to the garage, "Where The Action Is" (Living Eye/Sundazed). With a lack of concern for contrived "innovation" (a typical disregard throughout their long career), the Kings have instead issued a collection heavily weighted with covers. The set is totally steeped in the

sixties, with the Blues Magoos, Syndicate of Sound, and Chocolate Watchband, to name a few, represented alongside top-notch grouppenned material like "Wrong From Right" (heavily Question Mark-inspired) and "A Lovely Sort Of Death" (ditto, the Electric Prunes).

While the Chesterfield Kings admirably tackle the Hollies, Yardbirds, and Standells, the record's real highlights are it's more savage selections, including covers as good as their sixties sources (the Third Bardo's "I'm Five Years Ahead Of My Time", the Haunted's "1-2-5", "Don't Blow Your Mind", originally by Alice Cooper's high school band the Spiders; all tremendous versions). The most demented cut of all must be "I Walk In Darkness", a punk-r&b howler that one-ups its Van Morrison/Them



blueprint. It is the album's standout performance (though a more restrained meeting with Mark Lindsay on "Where Do We Go From Here" is also eliciting deserved raves).

While most modern age garage bands mask their limitations with accelerated arrangements, sloppiness, and cartoonish posturing, the Chesterfield Kings actually set their sights on recording challenges which they regularly meet or exceed, particularly on "Where The Action Is". Just dig how faithful they render covers of the Watchband's "Misty Lane" (in the Kings rotating set list for 20 years!) or the Electric Prunes' "Ain't It Hard" (with enough loving aim at embellishments to make Ed Cobb and/or Dave Hassinger proud). Lead guitarist Ted Okolowicz arguably steals the show with his consistently amazing soloing throughout each of the record's seventeen tracks. Then again, when vocalist Greg Prevost goes gutteral, as on "I Walk In Darkness" and too many covers to mention (again), watch out. This is the real punk rock, the shit Brian Jones died for, that Pete Townsend lost his hearing over.

Besides Prevost and Okolowicz, the Chesterfield Kings are bass player Andy Babiuk, brother Jeff Okolowicz on rhythm guitar and Vox organ, and drummer Mike Boise. The band's saga begins in the late seventies, in Rochester, NY (one of the least "punk" spots on the map!). As Greg Prevost explains, his initial idea for a garage band true to the spirit of

the mid-sixties presented challenges. Meeting Andy Babiuk, a like-minded sixties fanatic (then and now), enabled him to move ahead with his unique plan:

"Actually, when I first had the concept, it was a major struggle. In previous bands, it was always an effort to get guys to show up for rehearsal as well. When I met Andy, we had a common bond in all facets of culture-TV shows. films, and music. We had a vision that would work, as Andy was a real tyrant with other guys in the band. In a way, we were like the Mafia in the late 30's, the Al Capone era...Frank Nitti was the enforcer, he made sure things happened the way they were supposed to happen, regardless of what had to be done. This was a really great aspect of (Andy's) personality that was essential in those early times of the band. Andy could be a real asshole and kick a guy's ass, whereas I would feel bad about doing this sort of thing...Andy didn't give a shit about that."

As Prevost mentions, there was a history of punk bands leading up to the formation of the Chesterfield Kings: "Distorted Levels was the first record I did, in 1977. I put it out on my then label Nowhere Records. 500 copies were pressed. Totally mindless. This band was really the same band I had called Dr. Electro and the Retards. We recorded three albums that never saw the light of day. A mix of the Yardbirds, Sun Ra, Stooges, Seeds, all that I deemed cool.

I played guitar, a Strat through an Orange stack on 10. We all had an Orange stack, all on 10. I finally got wiped out by stress and volume, had a real breakdown, and was rushed to the hospital. I couldn't talk for several days, as something drastic exploded in my head. The volume hit me like a truck...then I commenced to wipe out and hit the floor, Strat first, on 10...quite a bang! I wanted to be more like the Count V and Seeds, so we cut a 45 which I wrote both sides of and produced with my friend John Fritsch, who also worked with us on our (Chesterfield Kings) first album, and on early Living Eye 45's from '79/'80. Incidentially, the Dr. Electro unit was formed shortly after I left College in 1974not by choice but due to lack of money. Otherwise I'd be a Doctor now. I had a couple of other bands after that that didn't last...

"Mean Red Spiders/Tar Babies was formed shortly after I disbanded the Distorted Levels, and almost directly before the Chesterfield Kings. I had met Andy, and this was something we did previous to the Chesterfield Kings. It was myself on lead vocals and lead guitar, Andy on lead guitar and bass, and Tony Kay (a friend from high school) on drums. We actually recorded a whole album, which never came out due to our transformation into the Chesterfield Kings. The 4-song EP was recorded in late '78, and actually consists of excerpts from the 14-song album...our friend Bulb put out a limited 500 or 1000 copies of this several years ago.

"The Tar Babies are really the same group, and an EP was released by this fucking jerk Rick Noll, who I thought was my friend; but he commenced to rip me off. He still owes me money. This was also put out several years ago. It contains the two sides of the Distorted Levels 45, and one Mean Red Spiders/Tar Babies track. The asshole had the gall to show up at one of our shows when we played in Lancaster, PA, where this creep hides. Andy, needless to say, was a bit liquored up that night and dragged him over folding chairs and busted glass, until he coughed up some of the money he owed me. Frank Nitti strikes again! The Mean Red Spiders record is considered as

grooves

The masterpiece of this era, though, arrived in the form of their first album, "Here Are The Chesterfield Kings" (this time on Mirror Records, a label run out of Armand Schauerbrock's famous House Of Guitars in Rochester). Despite the diabolical mix on many of its fourteen cuts (all re-cuts of sixties obscurities, natch), today it holds up better than many of its '66 long-playing inspirations. Remarkably, many of its cuts were improvements over the originals, the Choir's "I'm Going Home" and Little Phil & the Nightshadows' "60 Second Swinger" being two good examples. With the possible exception of a lightweight

"We did the whole trip, trying to get on a major, and all that shit. We just ended up putting out a shitty, weak, rushed album, which suffered due to our belief that we could actually be the next Monkees."

-Greg Prevost

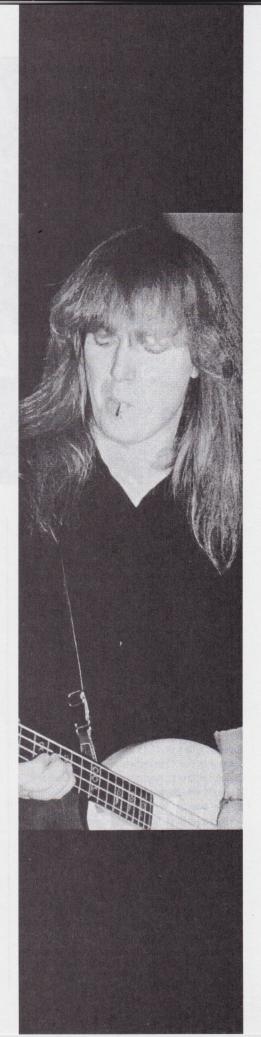
one of the most brutal, senseless 70's punk records."

The Chesterfield Kings formed in 1979, with a lineup featuring long-haulers Prevost and Babiuk, plus drummer Doug Meech and lead guitarist Rick Cona. Later the same year, they added rhythm guitarist/organist Orest Guran and debuted on their own Living Eye label with an impressive pair of way-obscure covers, "I Ain't No Miracle Worker/Exit 9". In '82 they released their second single, "I Can Only Give You Everything/Hey Little Bird", again on Living Eye. Today, copies of these singles fetch three figures, practically a bargain considering the authentic, ace performances to be found in the

(but great) revamp of "The Hustler" by the Sonics, every track was at least the equal of its original (an unheard of feat, then and today).

This consistency set the band apart from the mid-eighties "garage revival" that grew from Prevost's brainstorm. With "Here Are...", the Chesterfield Kings made it look easy. They were better than all their competition combined, and that's because the whole concept and spirit of making this music was their own. Everyone else (with the possible exception of the Lyres or Crawdaddys/Tell-Tale Hearts) was just ripping off their lead.

Unfortunately, one side effect to the Chesterfield Kings' then-rigid song selection





and look (if they sounded as good as the Standells or Blues Magoos, they looked as great as "December's Children"-era Stones), was a following of fans that could not accept any tampering with this well-cultivated image. "I hate to admit this", says Prevost, "but I'm afraid we (The Chesterfield Kings) are largely responsible for this narrow-minded approach to musical structure. When we started out, we had this arrogant, self-important attitude that 'This is the way it is, or else it's shit'. Unfortunately, we brainwashed a lot of headcases who are still locked into that first fucking album, which, if you really listen to it, is a big piece of shit. It sounds like it was recorded through a fly's ear!" As mentioned already, "Here Are The Chesterfield Kings" is an absolute classic, regardless of Greg's own criticisms. It may be as mandatory as "The Rolling Stones Now"!

By 1984, the Chesterfield Kings were being treated by many of the big media outlets (*USA Today*, MTV, *Creem*, etc.) as future stars, and seemed poised to step up to a major label. Instead, nothing happened. "We did the whole trip, trying to get on a major, and all that shit. We just ended up putting out a shitty, weak, rushed album, which suffered due to our belief that we could actually be the next Monkees." That album, "Stop!" (Mirror, '85), is lightweight and just a little lacklustre. Having shifted from their original covers-only concept, the LP con-

tained a number of group-penned selections. However, material like "It's Allright" and "You Belong To Me" had to stand as highlights, when in fact they amounted to fun but minor league songwriting.

Prevost: "I must admit that the only thing the guys in the early line-up contributed was the fact that there was a very short period of time where all parties involved were really dedicated to the band...we were a team, so to speak. This didn't last long, however, due to Rick Cona's rampant hormones, Ori's hangups with being a corporate-obsessed asshole, and Doug (Meech) just getting tired. It was OK for awhile." Early '86 marked the departure of rhythm guitarist Ori Guran, who was replaced by Walt O'Brien.

"Don't Open 'Til Doomsday" (Mirror, '87) followed, marking the Kings' initial steps from the self-imposed sixties straightjacket (including a collaboration with Dee Dee Ramone). However, the finished product wasn't entirely memorable. Prevost characterizes "Doomsday" as "another disrupted, chaotic record, and a vivid piece of shit"!

In the late eighties, Prevost and Babiuk cleaned house. The remnants of the original band had tired of the original plan, it seems, as best recounted in the demise of lead guitarist Rick Cona. Prevost: "Hey, I remember back in '87 when we tossed everyone out of the band, and we actually thought of getting (Cona) in

the band again...we tried him out, and he was pathetic. Shortly after that he had this shower of shit band with his hooker/slut girlfriend as a lead singer, and they did Megadeth and Metallica covers. He donned a headband and Iron Maiden t-shirt as his look. Fuck, ask anyone in Lancaster, Pa...during the last shows we did before he exited the band he wore this shit, and I told him he looked like a jackass."

The early Chesterfield Kings fan troops probably thought the same of the new edition, '89 "Berlin Wall Of Sound" band (Greg and Andy with Paul Rocco, lead guitar and Brett Reynolds, drums; this old fan wasn't around to judge, having already written the Kings off with "Doomsday" and the waste of time "Baby Doll"/acoustic "I Cannot Find Her" single). Gone were the mid-sixties trappings, replaced by a Faces-slash-glam look and metallic sound.

"To understand why this album came out the way it did", states Prevost, "you'd have to understand our chaotic situation. We had just finished a massive tour of Europe, and upon returning (1987) we (Greg and Andy) threw everyone out of the band! We were in debt up the ass-we owed thousands of dollars to everyone-never-ending corporate bills came in every other day. We actually had to go to the bank and take out a mega-loan, and have our wives co-sign all these papers, just to get our heads above water. Eventually we paid our debts, but at this time it was difficult to keep one's head

together.

"We attempted to get together with Jerry Nolan and Sylvain Sylvain of the Dolls...we didn't quite get together, then we met Rocco and Brett. The "Berlin" album was actually two bands amidst chaos. Two songs, "Pills" and the Dee Dee Ramone-penned "Come Back Angeline" were recorded in Berlin a year before the rest of the album. Doug Meech is playing drums on those two songs. The band was a mess. Fighting, firing, debt. We actually had just gotten those two guys, Rocco and Brett, in the band, as we were recording the album and replacing guys and their parts on the record. "We had our friend Richie Scarlet produce it, which made it a bit heavy-handed. We were in a blur, had our heads up our ass pretty much. We wanted it to sound like the first New York Dolls album, with MC5 and Stooges overtones. It had those elements, but also had all those cock-rock metal trappings, and a shitty drum/guitar sound that made it the piece of shit it is. On top of that we signed up with this hotshot New York management company who had shitty acts like Whitney Houston on their roster, and they tried to make us into something we weren't. They saw us and thought we were the new New York Dolls, but tried to promote us as some fucking metal act. The result was disastrous, with all kinds of bad scenes. Being in a band for over 20 years can have some real low points. This was one of our difficult eras. We learned a lot about everything. and hated everyone and everything".

Neither a sub-standard 3-song EP or the "Drunk On Muddy Water" "blues" project seemed to help. It wasn't until '94, with the release of "Let's Go Get Stoned", that the "Berlin Wall"-era band really rocked on record in a listenable light. However, behind the scenes, the line-up was through (thanks in part to one King taking the junkie rocker ethos to arm).

The current Chesterfield Kings quickly followed; they were all obvious choices as they shared the same musical compulsions as Prevost and Babiuk. They debuted on no less than the most obsessive album project of the 'gos, the dual-LP "Surfin' Rampage" (Mirror). "Being dedicated to the cause is first and foremost. This is the only lineup that really counts," declares Greg. "These guys are cool guys, my friends, and we all think on one plane. We live in the same time warp. Plus, these guys can all play great. Comparatively speaking, Ted is the new Jim McGuinn, Mike is the new Paul Whaley, and Jeff is the new Johnny Thunders."

While "Surfin' Rampage" received a rave response from aficionados, its distribution was limited. While clearly less ambitious, the coverheavy "Where The Action Is" has enjoyed the greater impact of the two recent projects. From a distribution and promotion standpoint, ink-

ing a deal for "Action" (and other Living Eye Productions) with Sundazed Music only helped the cause. But more importantly, the CD's song selection found the Chesterfield Kings singularly focused on 1966-67 garage punk. This qualified it as their most wonderfully one-dimensional '66-styled release in over a dozen years.

The Chesterfield Kings' upcoming activites threaten to turn into a total multimedia assault. The Master Plan, according to Prevost: "As you know, we have the studio, Living Eve Ltd. We plan on doing several projects. As soon as we get back from Europe (September live dates), we will finish the film we've been working on, "Where Is The Chesterfield King?". We also plan on doing several other TV related escapades..."The Living Eve Cavalcade Of Stars", a ridiculous half-hour comedy skit show. You know our humor. It will be bizarre. "Also, we're branching out as far as starting The Living Eye Actor's Guild. We are working on two plays, which will be presented in the Upstate New York area; an avant-garde rendition of Shakespeare's "Taming Of The Shrew", and "Readings Of Edgar Allen Poe". The parts will be played by all of the guys in the band, as well as other members of the guild. Also, we're producing other bands that we like and working on our next album, "Mindbending Sounds Of The Chesterfield Kings", which includes

many collaborations with various icons.

"TV is our favorite medium, so that will be our goal, to have our own slot on square TV to show all the corporate, brainwashed assholes you can have a great show without all the politically correct shit-out-your-ass crap, and without watching some boring assholes fucking (?). This kind of shit on TV is just that: shit-fucking corporate shit aimed at the masses of low-IQ assholes. I think it's time to just have a blast. That is our goal, or plan. I guess when you have some twentysomething dweeb with zits calling the shots, all that could possibly turn up is shit. Oh well, it's more like a war plan."

Stay tuned for the war. For now, here's Greg Prevost one last time, summing up the band's first two decades: "We don't look back and cry over spilt milk. It's shit down the sewer. In twenty-two years, you do many things as a band. The one thing we always did was keep it together. I would dare any one of those "armchair rock stars" to maintain a band for twenty-two years. Geeks are always saying dumb shit about how long our hair is, or how we don't look like we did on our first album that came out almost twenty years ago. Well, they can go fuck themselves. We don't fucking give a rat's ass about what anyone thinks." Yeah! Get used to 'em. The Chesterfield Kings is here to stay.



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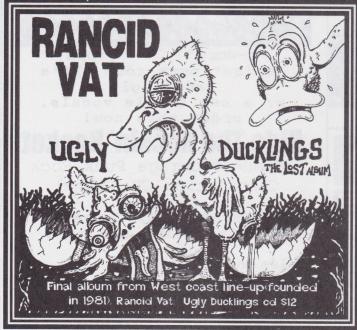
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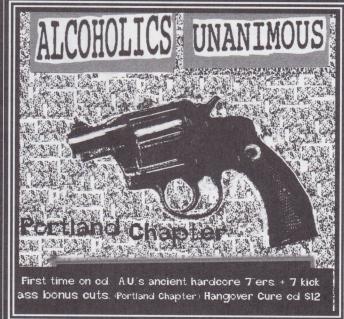
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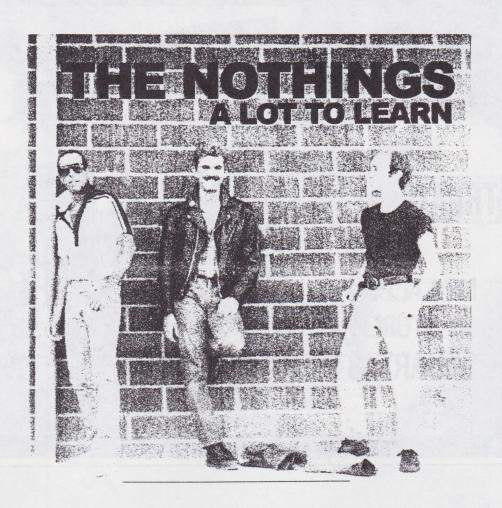








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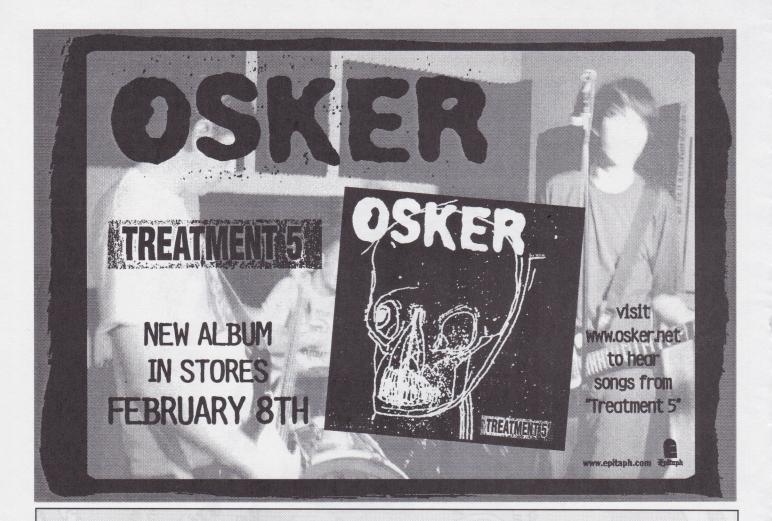
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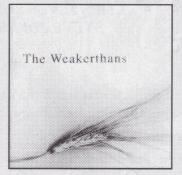


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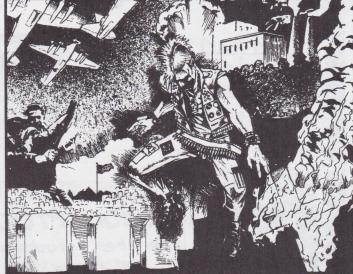
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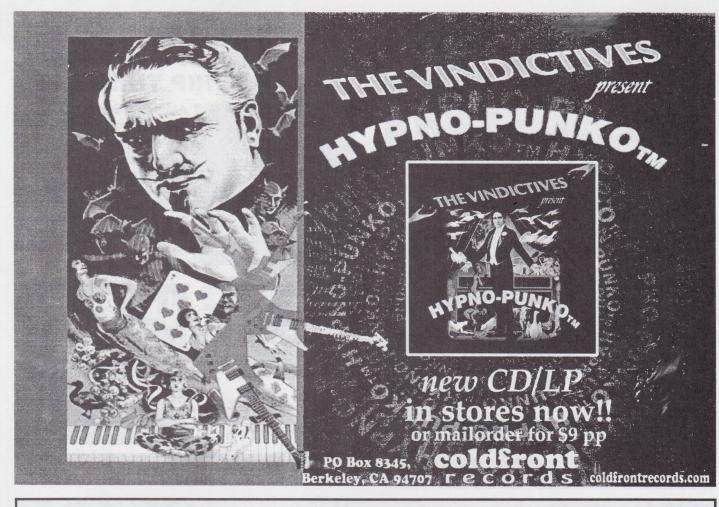
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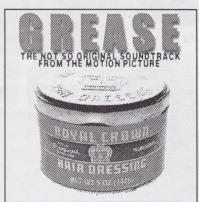


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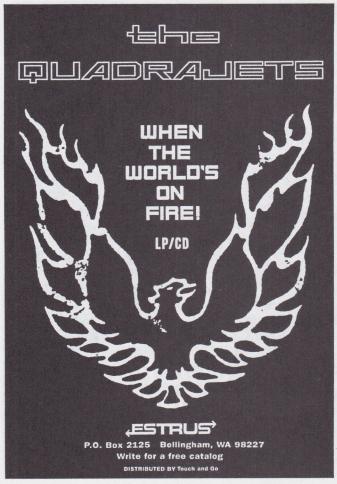
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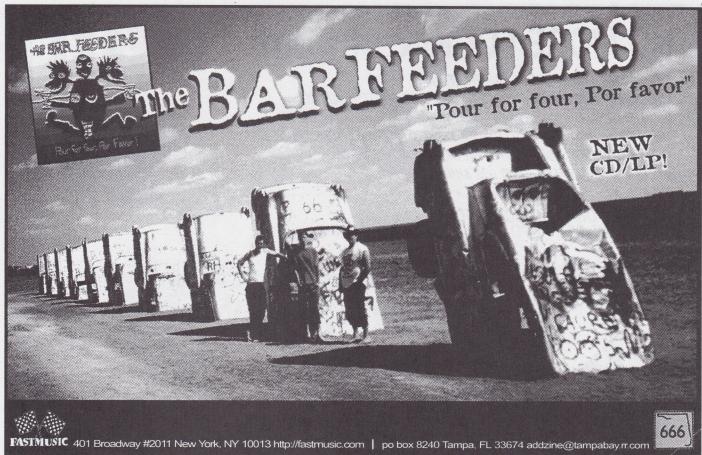
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HIT SQUAD

YOUR CRUCIFIX IS IN MY PEANUT BUTTER, OR APOCALYPSE, NOW A GO GO

ave you ever spent a sunny afternoon hoarding food and water in your closet because you were certain that the world was going to end? I have. The brilliant part is that I was all of ten when I did it. The genius part is that the "food" I saved consisted of razzles, you know, "first it's a candy, then it's a gum". I had a super huge box from the wholesale candy place and I figured it was a good start. The water was just water, I'm not that retarded. Yep, I was hoarding for the apocalypse while all you little Y2K wimps were drooling on your mom's dirty pillows. I knew about our impending doom at a tender age thanks to a man named Nostradamus and a cable channel called HBO, which decided to run a sunny little special about his prophecies. At ten, the end of the world scared me silly, now I can't wait for it to happen...to some of us.

Jesus Fever...catch it! Too many people already have. Too many people adhere to the reactionary dogma that is Christianity. The Bible tells its followers to kill in the name of their god. It calls homosexuals an abomination. It brightly informs the reader that they "shall not suffer a witch to live". It is misogynist (look it up, boys) and sexually repressive. It has been used as a tool by sociopathic megalomaniacs the world over to subjugate and control the masses. It tells you outright that theirs is the only one way to eternal happiness. Coincidentally, by not choosing this way you are automatically choosing an eternity in hell, a place fabricated by the same loons that wrote the dirn' thing to scare you into giving them all your earthly possessions, including your sexual power. The kicker is that the Bible calls their devil "the prince of lies". Well, I don't know about any of you, but if I was the ultimate liar I would eagerly disguise myself as the only path to true happiness in order to trick you into accepting my control! What kind of joyful, loving, forgiving God promises eternal torture if you don't do exactly what it tells you to? I'll give you two guesses, and no, the first one doesn't count.

This may all seem very depressing. Quite frankly it does depress me to live in a world where these right-wing eager beavers go around abusing and killing people to show their adoration for their bloodthirsty deity. Matthew Shepard is probably dead because homosexuality isn't "natural" according to christian beliefs; go ask the asshole who runs the "God Hates Fags" website. An extremist, to be sure, but if you middle of the roaders who just "don't understand" or "pray for" those that are different from you think you're exempt from this sort of thing, guess again. You're brand of prejudice may not carry a gun, but in some ways it is more dangerous because on a more subtle level it subconsciously accepts the views of those zealots who do advocate violence for the glory of your god. A dyke friend of mine who grew up Catholic once made the following comment regarding socalled pro-life extremists "don't they know to hate the sin, not the sinner?" If you must, hate homosexuality as a sinful act, but not the homosexual, or hate abortion for ethical reasons, but not the woman having it, because in doing so you sanction the prejudices, lack of compassion, fear, and hatred that makes anyone who is not the ultimate example of a "good" Christian fear for their lives far more than anyone who is not marginalized would

ever want to imagine. Unfortunately, you can't pick and choose what you like from your belief system and then throw away the rest to suit your needs or ease your guilty conscience. It's all or nothing, because the Bible tells you so!

The Bible is also telling you that the end of your world is coming soon! If you hardcore Christians get your wish, you'll all be meeting your maker right quick. The end of your world will be the beginning of a beautiful new one for



the rest of us! Isn't that great? We all get exactly what we want! You get to be trampled under the pounding hooves of the four horsemen and we meek folks get the earth, just like it says in that book of yours! Don't worry, the rest of your friends won't be left out! Anyone involved in such a dogmatic, hierarchical, repressive path to enlightenment gets to go along for the ride! Not because I said so-after all, I'm just a lowly Heathen, so what the fuck do I know? No, your own instruction books tell you it's true! You all end up the same way! Hooray. I wonder if it will be hard for the TV evangelists to give up the hookers when they see Christ? Or for the KKK to leave their sheets in the dryer when the old man with the white beard comes calling? Or for that chick on PTL to leave her pink wig on the night stand when her sweet lord calls her home? I'll miss that wig, it's so punk! Punk. Christians will do anything for a buck, or at least a soul. Talk about the whore of Babylon! I've discovered that the latest lure they are using on the kiddies is punk music. Yes our very own beloved, anarchic, dirty, raw, snotty, polluted punk culture is being used to brainwash the "youth of today". Some of them are calling it "ChristCore". What will they think of next? INRHIdustrial? Personally, I prefer to call it "Lambcore", since it's just so much cuter! Unfortunately, there are a whole slew of websites that peddle this fake-ass crap. One of the christian networks even has its own thrash/skate show. It's not called "Jesus On Wheels", but I really wish it was. Fortunately, most of these websites are boring or just plain bad. "Jesus On Wheels" could be the revised definition of the word "lame". It is so surreal to watch a bunch of christian posers with wacky hairdos try to be punk, with those goofy permanent grins nailed to their faces, grins that only total submission to the ultimate authority figure can provide. Silly me, I always thought that the purpose of punk was questioning authority and refusing to accept the status quo. Luckily for me the Christians came along to explain its true meaning to the rest of us. One of these "punk on a stick" websites helps hardcore illiterates like me by filling us in on the history of punk, evangelical-style:

"Punk Music originally originated in America but became very popular in England. This music is usually fast (some slower than others). It is crazy music, we love it!!!... I wish I knew more

HIT SQUAD



about the history of punk but I don't I am not as wise as some people. I am just trying to show people what bands are out there".

Yay! Did you ever even realize how happy-kooky-nuttywholesome-fun that that there music they call "punk" is? Hallelujah! Punk makes me want to join the football team, teach Sunday school, and bake cookies for the cops all at once!! What an ultra-maroon, What a gulli-bull!! Does this (most likely) 50-year old Holy Roller hiding behind a not even passable "punk" website think he's fooling anyone?! I guess, since his website promises that xtianity will "save your life", he probably is tricking some hopeless, desperate kids who are looking for love into joining his cult. These evil motherfuckers are like the goddamn childcatcher from Chitty-Chitty Bang-Bang, luring children into their cages with promises of ice-cream, lollipops, and now punk rock. The arrogance of Christians and other members of organized religions never ceases to amaze me. They assume that everyone's lifestyle should be identical to their own. They disparage any lifestyle that is different from theirs, yet when it suits their subversive needs they co-opt Holidays, music, deities, whatever it takes to mind-nap a new member. I couldn't care less if they all would rather die and deny themselves any normal human pleasures than enjoy the gift of

here on earth, but do they have to try and drag the rest of us along for the stale, sad ride? The answer is yes. Part of the job of a good xtian is to convert as many "heathens" as possible. As far as I'm concerned, this is a pathological goal. If you know that what you are saying is true, why would you feel a compulsive need to convince everyone else of that fact? If you actually knew it was true, you wouldn't. Christians (and others like them) are so shaky in their beliefs that they seek reassurance in the form of mass conversion. They will never be satisfied until we are all exactly alike, kind of like the Gap.

The power lies within the rest of us to thwart the xtian manifesto. Don't allow your civil liberties to be abused or removed at any time. If someone shoves their mainstream religious bullshit down your throat in an inappropriate arena like school or work, fight back! Be vocal and proud of whatever you are, and call a lawyer if you absolutely have to. Above all, don't let the little things slide or we will all be living in Kansas, where it is now legal to pray in public school. Next stop, a Christian version of Khomeini's Iran!

If you want to give these lame-ass xtian's a piece of your punk-addled brain, maybe even clueing them in to the genuine history of our fine tradition, go to the cheesy website in question; Angelfire.com Will crucifun replace crucifucks? The choice is yours.

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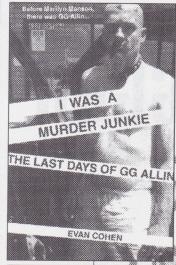
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THE ALMIGHTY TOP TENS

SHITLIST

Jeff Bale

BONECRUSHER - "Working for Nothin'" CD DRIVEWAY SERVICE - "Under My Hood" 7" GREAT SCOTS - "Arrive!" LP GROUP 50 - "Apocalypse" (radio song) GUTTERSNIPE - "Never Surrender..." EP INSULTS - "Insults to Injury" LP NEW YORK WHORES - "Play the Fool" 7" SMOKE - "The Best of Sugar Man" CD SPITFIRES - "Social Club" CD V/A - "Fuzz, Flaykes, & Snakes, vols 1&2" CDs

Alan Wright

BIRDS - "Collectors Guide To..." CD
THE GO - self-titled CD
VELVET UNDERGROUND - "Caught
Between..." 4xCD box set
MISFITS - "Famous Monsters" CD
GENERATION X - "K.M.D. - Sweet Revenge"
LP
STILETTO BOYS - "Rockets & Bombs" CD
BEATNIK TERMITES - "Bubblecore CD
BLOOD DRAINED COWS - CD
SCREAMERS - "Demos 1977-78" bootleg LP
TURBONEGRO - "Darkness Is Forever" double
live LP

Tim Stegall (in no particular order)

- 1) CANDY ASS demo tape
- 2) BACKYARD BABIES "Total 13" CD
- 3) BACKYARD BABIES "Knockouts" CD EP
- 4) BACKYARD BABIES "Highlights" CD EP
- 5) TOILET BOYS "Sinners and Saints" CD EP
- 6) TOILET BOYS "Living Like A Millionaire" CD EP
- 7) BLACK HALOS debut LP/CD
- 8) DONNAS "Get Skintight" LP/CD
- 9) THE MOONEY SUZUKI CD
- 10) RAMONES "Hey! Ho! Let's Go!" double CD

Jimi Cheetah

OBLIVIANS - "Best of the Worst" CD LORD HIGH FIXERS - "Is Your Club A Secret Weapon?" CD

AMERICAN STEEL - "Rogues March" cd DISCOUNT - "Crash Diagnostic" CD THE KNOTTS - "The Crowd Loves it" 7" THE CHUBBIES - "Wheb I Was Your Girlfriend" 7"

THE CASUALTIES - "The Early Years" CD V/A - "You Gotta Have Moxie" CD THE CAUSEY WAY - "With Loving and Open Arms" CD

SUBURBAN VOICE - Issue # 43

Ian Randumb

- 1) BODIES "Addicted To You" CD EP
- 2) BELTONES live
- 3) REDUCERS S.F. live
- 4) THE VOLUNTEERS "Demo"
- 5) CHOPTOPS live
- 6) SOLDIER 76 "Power It Up" 7"
- 7) THE ARRIVALS
- 8) THE WORTHLESS "I'm Still Having Fun"
- 9) ROOT STOMP "Defending My Bar/Wasted" 7"
- 10) INTERNET PORN

Jeremy Cool

BUZZCOCKS & LUNACHICKS - Live at The

DYNAMITE BOY - "Finder's Keeper's" CD AMERICAN STEEL - "Rogue's March" CD & live

SAVES THE DAY - "Through Being Cool" CD ANN BERETTA - "To All Our Fallen Heroes ..." CD

NOFX - "The Decline" EP TRAVOLTAS / TUULI - Split 7"

JAWBREAKER - "24 Hour Revenge Therapy" CD

SWINGIN' UTTERS / YOUTH BRIGADE - Split CD

BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER

Dave Johnson

1) JAWBREAKER - "24 Hour Revenge

Therapy"

- 2) THE CLASH "Live: From Here to Eternity"
- 3) AMERICAN STEEL "Rogue's March"
- 4) SAVES THE DAY "Through Being Cool"
- 5) NOFX "The Decline"
- 6) CLEVELAND BOUND DEATH SENTENCE
 CD
- 7) DIVIT "Latest Issue"
- 8) KID DYNAMITE "Shorter, Faster, Louder"
- 9) JAWBREAKER "Live: 4/30/96" CD
- 10) The fact that there are actually bands named BATMAN PUKE, STUPID BABIES GO MAD, and MASSIVE FERGUSON.

Brett Mathews

CHEETAH'S RECORDS Showcase Show DIVIT - "Latest Issue"

DIVIT - "Latest Issue"

NOFX - "The Decline"

AMERICAN HEARTBREAK

AMERICAN STEEL - "Rogue's March"

ZODIAC KILLERS

MUD CITY MANGLERS 7"

THE COMAS

STUPID BABIES GO MAD - "Turbo! Trash! Frenzy!" 7"

SMALL BROWN BIKE - "Collection" CD

Jami Wolf

- 1) LOWER CLASS BRATS (9/99, Bottom Of The Hill)
- 2) REATARDS (Covered Wagon, 11/99)/ REATARDS "Grown Up, Fucked Up" LP
- 3) TRUST FUND BABIES "Can't Trust Us" 7"ep/ Live at the Mad Dog 11/99)
- 4) NEW YORK WHORES "Piss Off" 7"ep
- 5) THE BODIES (The Boomerang 10/99)
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- 7) SLAUGHTER & THE DOGS "Do It Dog STyle" re-issue LP
- 8) V/A "Still Hate Your Neighbors" 7"ep
- 9) THE MAD "The 1978 ep" EP
- 10) V/A "Cumstains Over My Record Collection" LP

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ABSENTEES

"4 Previously Unreleased Songs From 1981" 7" EP

Four previously unreleased songs by these maniacs from 1981. Totally insane, distorted sounding stuff; I can see why JELLO BIAFRA was



a fan of these guys. "Can't Relate" is my fave, but all four songs - none of which are much more more than a minute long - and I think the first three are under a minute, are great, furious blasts of primal punk rock. (AW)

(BRAIN TRANSPLANT/P.O. BOX 24310/LOS ANGELES, CA 90024-0310)

ABSENTEES

"Tryin' To Mess With Me"/"F.U.M."
7"

The A-side, a real standout from "Killed By Death" vol. 7, sees reissue from the master tapes on this little piece of wax. Great stuff, with a total-



ly weird guitar part

and an out-of-control sound. The flipside, "Fuck You Mary", is about 30 seconds long and the title says it all.(AW)

(UG RECORDS/P.O. BOX 18625, LONG BEACH, CA 90807)

ADOLF AND THE PISS ARTISTS "This Is Your Law" 7" EP

Brutal punk
rock played
with no apologies. I think the
singer used to
write for
Suburban Voice.
"Skunx" is my



favorite track, sounding classic like GBH or BLITZ. Powerful lyrics that are sure to ruffle some feathers, that I find surprisingly intelligent and open minded for a band with such an abrasive and baiting name. (JC)

(45 REVOLUTIONS/P O BOX 2568/DECATUR, GA 30031)

AFI "All Hallows E.P." CD EP

I'm sure nobody is quite as thrilled about this record as the band themselves. Knowing their long fixation with all things Halloweeny and



their love of the MISFITS (of whom they do a rip-roaring cover - "Totalimmortal"). The originals brim with the hyper-talented energy we love and expect from AFI. Get one while supplies last. (JC)

(Nitro/7071 Warner Avenue Suite F-736/ Huntington Beach, CA 92647)

AEROBITCH/DIALTONES split 7"

My expectations keep getting higher and higher with every AEROBITCH song that I hear, and yet they never seem to fail to deliver. Both



their songs here are taken from their latest full-length, but this might be a good cheap way to check them out. Female-fronted rock influenced punk at its finest. The DIALTONES offer up quite the solid rocker themselves in "45 RPM" which is more of a straight forward fast paced r&r number. All in all, quite the keeper. (BAM)

(BELUGA/BOX 8158 104 20/STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN)

AEROBITCH/LOUDMOUTHS split 7" EP

A EROBITCH
play fast - really fast - rough
punk with gruff
sounding female
vocals. They rock.
Their three, really
short songs are
"How Does It



Feel," "I Don't get It" and "Motorgirl." LOUDMOUTHS, fronted by Dulcinea and Beth, do two smokin' originals, including "Wildkids" and "Basket Case," both of which are on their latest album "Get It," but these are different versions from their four-piece days, prior to guitarist Jay's departure. I think that's him singing on the awesome cover of THE LEWD'S "Kill Yourself", which stays true to the reckless spirit of the original. (AW)

AGAINST ALL AUTHORITY/ CRIMINALS

"Exchange" CD

The latest split in the Sub City benefit series. An incredibly worthy beneficiary (the needle exchange program of the Berkeley Free Clinic) and seven



choice cuts from two righteous, rocking bands. AAA have never sounded better on their punked out ska-as-fuck offerings, and the CRIMINALS turn in perhaps their finest snarling snotty ditties to date. My only complaint is that its too short. (RK)

(SUB CITY/PO BOX 7495/VAN NUYS, CA 91409)

AGNOSTIC FRONT "Riot Riot Upstart" CD

Astrangely lifeless, lacklustre record. Sure, the production is nice and heavy and clean and there's mob choruses a-plenty,



but where're the aggression, the anger, the power? A distinct lack of catchy songs doesn't do them any favors either. Definitely not the stuff that legends are made of. (RK)

(EPITAPH/2798 SUNSET BLVD./LOS ANGELES, CA 90026)

ALL OR NOTHING H.C. "Sacrifice, Discipline, Bliss" CD

Basic, driving punk with spirited female vocals. Reminds me alot of New York's APPLE -both musically and their political concerns in the



lyrics. A fine, solid release that should appeal to both to those with a jones for this new wave of 'street-punk' stuff, and those hankering back a little to the old early 80s Brit-influenced punk sounds. (RK)

(On THE RAG RECORDS/PO Box 251/Norco, CA 91760-0251)

VERDEN ALLEN "For Each Other" CD

MOTT THE HOOPLE's "Death May Be Your Santa Claus" and "The Moon Upstairs" are meat 'n' potatoes '71 takes on punk, yet as influential



to London's safety pin set as were the NEW YORK DOLLS or STOOGES. The malevolent, distorto-tone organ on these rage-fueled tracks was courtesy of VERDEN ALLEN, who nearly three decades later resurfaces with his second solo LP. The sound has mellowed sharply enough so that no self-respecting punk would be caught dead listening to this. But unlike in his MOTT days, Allen has found his voice and still can be counted on for those sweeping - if less distorted - B-3 fills. (JJ)

(ANGEL AIR/PO BOX 14/STOWMARKET/SUFFOLK IP14 4UD/ENGLAND)

AMERICAN STEEL "Rogues March" CD

At the risk of b e i n g accussed of nepotism, I hereby declare this easily the BEST album of 1999. Truly an amazing record. Fresh and new



songs that live as a part of your consciousness all day after you listen to them. Two vocalists that mix rich, lathery, adnoidal crooning with impassioned, shouts, hoots and howls. Some of the most intelligent and literate lyrics out there. Complex, energetic interwoven guitar lines on top of a bootcamp-tight rhythm section reminiscent of Simonon and Headon of the CLASH. Solid mix of styles from straight forward in your face punk, to tasteful ska bits and pieces, to almost a rock feel on a song or two. Comparisons have allready bean made to LEATHERFACE And HOT WATER MUSIC, but I find AMERICAN STEEL far more compelling than either of those much acclaimed groups. I catch myself going around singing "Whooooooaao, the Rogue's March", "Sweeeet Adeline" and "Ooooh! Bloody Murder"; bugging all my uninitiated friends to hurry up and get the record so we can talk about how cool it is. Maybe I'm an obsessive dork...maybe it's just that good. You be the judge! (JC)

(LOOKOUT/PO BOX 11374/BERKELEY, CA 94712)

ANGRY SAMOANS

"I'm In Love With Your Mom"/"Too Animalistic"

After VOM split
up - with
singer R.
MELTZER returning to his journalism career - the
SAMOANS formed
out of their ashes.
The rest is punk



history. These two tracks are both VOM songs previously recorded and released on VOM's sole 5-song EP. Due to lack of songs, the embryonic SAMOANS tracked these two nuggets on a demo. While I like the sheer obnxiousness of the VOM versions better,

REVIEWS

"I'm In Love..." is still one of the most insane lyrical abominations ever written and any version of it is fine by me. Why the hell hasn't anyone ever covered it? (AW)

(BULGE/BOX 1173, GREEN BAY, WI 54305)

ANN BERETTA "To All Our Fallen Heroes" CD

These guys have never been shy about proudly parading their influences on their sleeves. In a previous incarnation they really, really wanted to



be AVAIL. They still have a strong hankering, but such desires have been updated with an equally mighty predeliction for the anthemic end of RANCID. I guess as tribute bands go, these dudes are in the front rank. The world surely doesn't need, however, yet another version of "Surrender." (RK)

(LOOKOUT RECORDS/PO BOX 11374/BERKELEY, CA 94712)

APOCALYPSE HOBOKEN "Inverse/Reverse/Perverse" CD

Afine collection records, b-sides and some new stuff. The strength of AH has always been their diversity. They manage to



combine cheesy pop-punk with sterling hardcore; good ol' punk rock with anthemic rockage, and do it without sounding forced or contrived. Being blessed with a distinctive singer isn't a drawback either. (Damn fine) covers by MEN WITHOUT HATS, the VINDICTIVES and RITES OF SPRING are as good an indication of their breadth and styles as anything else. (RK)

(SUBURBAN HOME/PO BOX 40757/DENVER, CO 80204)

APOCALYPSE HOBOKEN "Microstars" CD

Brand new offering from this consistently excellent - and eclectic - band. They remind me a lot of a kind of punk FRANK ZAPPA - manag-



ing to flit seamlessly from perfect pop ditties to experimental oddities and make it all hang together quite naturally. Progressive hardcore? Time to trade in those swing records for a sound investment, (RK)

(KUNG FU RECORDS/PO BOX 3061/SEAL BEACH, CA 90740)

ARONDIES "Introducing..." LP

Best known for tune "69," which appeared on the "Burghers" '60's punk comp of Pennsylvanian garage bands in the '80s. Sort of



yer basic party/fratrock style band, as evidenced by the fraternity tribute "Sigma Nu," they do one of the strangest versions of "Louie Louie" I've ever heard, speeding up the tempo for a real manic effect, plus other stompers like "One Dead Chicken" and "Stop Move Jump Slide." Pretty cool. (AW)

(GET HIP/COLUMBUS AND PREBLES AVE./PITTSBURGH, PA 15233)

ARRIVALS/TOSSERS split 7"

THE ARRIVALS are fucking great! Tight as hell with lots of stops and go's but not like that crappy snow-core that has plagued the airwaves lately, just good honest punk rock. The vocals on "Last Lullaby" remind me of the HUDSON FALCONS. I definitely hope to hear more of these guys. THE

TOSSERS, on the other hand, fucking blow; it's wannabe POGUES horseshit! How can you split a record with two bands that have absolutely



nothing in common? Fuckin' beats me. (IR)

(SMILIN' BOB/PO 1002/HOMEWOOD, IL/60430-0002)

ASTHMA HOUNDS "Dan" 7"

This record is actually quite good; twangy, delayed guitars, country influenced rock-n-roll. Now its not that new breed pseudo-country/ psy-



cho-billy, roots-rock shite, and its not that cowboy hat-wearing, trucker-punk, big-rig drivin', poseur rock either. This is actually pretty rockin', toe-tappin' rock-n-roll action with soul, baby! Check this out if you dare. By the way, it's on DEAD MOON's label, Tombstone, so that should be reason enough! (JAW)

(TOMBSTONE RECORDS/POB 1463/CLACKAMAS, OR 97015)

ASTROLLOYD

"Spaceman Warrior" 7"

think I saw this guy live once, and it was just him onstage with a keyboard and a kazoo jumping around like a madman. There seems to be a full



band on this recording, but it still doesn't make much sense. (JER)

(SPAM/PO BOX 21588/EL SOBRANTE, CA 94820-1588)

AUTOMATICS

"I'm A Kid/Life of Crime" 7"

The best thing I've ever heard from this band (if it's the same AUTOMATICS). I recall their earlier material being much more uptempo, but on



this 45 they offer up powerful mid-tempo punkers with satirical snooty lyrics and a pronounced pop sensibility. Both songs could turn out to be anthems for the new millenium. A hands-down winner. (JB)

(JUST ADD WATER/PO BOX 420661/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94142)

THE BEATIN' PATH "The Original Nothing People/I Waited So Long" 7"

Anew entry in Get Hip's archive series, and this time Greg (along with the Arf Arf! label?) has unearthed a little-known



Pennsylvania oufit called the BEATIN' PATH. "...Nothing People" is a psych-punk gem with poppy undercurrents, an eerie organ, and snot-nosted vocals; the flip is a tasty instrumental with a smile-inducing fuzz guitar bridge. (JB)

(GET HIP/PO BOX 666/CANONSBURG, PA?)

BEEFCAKE "Rejected" CD

t is a sad fact of musical life, that, of course, for every great original, there will be a thousand sad immitators. In this particular case, it



would be horribly cruel and unfair punish-

ment to hold Fat Mike personally responsible for these retards trying so desparately hard to sound exactly like NOFX. An embarassment. (RK)

(FEARLESS RECORDS/13772 GOLDENWEST ST. #545/WESTMINSTER, CA 92683)

BERSERKERZ LP

This Dutch band's debut, a 45 rpm album, has 10 songs on it that were written by a guy who useta live in my apartment for about a year. This



explains why they sound more than, um, a little "familiar". While imitation is the sincerest form of flattery and while seeing this 3-piece spread the Slug Rock gospel is by all means a good thing, the disc mastering isn't too hot, which makes the crash cymbals in particular sound thin and feeble. In spite of this flaw, anyone who likes mid-tempo to fast riff-based punk delivered with energy to spare, loud guitars, and wailing leads is advised to check these clogheads out. (TS)

(ROCKETDOG/SOUNDS OF SUBTERRANEA/PO BOX 103662/34036 KASSEL/GERMANY)

BILLYBOY e la sua BANDA "Bastardi Dentro"

talian Oi! done really well. Good quality on the recording, obviously talented musicians playing mid to fast tempo Oi! with big vocals



alongside. I just wish I could read Italian. A good listen - even though I couldn't understand a damn thing I was trying to sing along to.(IR)

(SOA/VIA ODERISI DA GABBIO/67769,00146/ROMA ITALY)

BLACKSTONES

"Chicago City"/"Barrel Of Dreams"

Previously unreleased 60's garage mayhem" it proclaims on the sleeve of this record. No one even knows who the hell these guys were,



but they recorded the upbeat R and B pounder on the A-side onto a metal acetate from which this is taken, along with its flipside. While "Chicago City" is a rocker, "Barrel Of Dreams" is a more moody number with wailing harmonica in the background. Surface noise is unfortunately unavoidable, but that's no reason not to dig it. (AW)

(ROVING EYE/P.O. BOX 2048, PALTINE, IL 60078)

BLANKS 77 "C.B.H" CD

Afurther salvo
of raucous
blasts of '77 beerd r e n c h e d
R A M O N E S derived pogopunk. They certainly do it well,
and obviously



remain committed to being punks - and drinking. Drunk punk with balls. Or should that be spikes? (RK)

(RADICAL RECORDS/77 BLEECKER STREET, #C2-21/New York, NY 10012)

BLONDIE "X-Offenders" CD-ROM

This is a package that - like the RAMONES one I have - comes as both an audio CD and a CD-ROM for yer computer, and a features a live



BLONDIE set from the German TV show "Musikladen," put out by the same company

REVIEWS

that did a cool RAMONES one. It doesn't give a date on this, but I'd guess it was filmed in '78 or '79 - after their first two albums, p e r s o n a l



favorites - "Parallel Lines was okay, though I still can't stand "Heart of Glass". This is BLONDIE at their power-poppin' best. The visuals are cool, but there's a few glitches, apparent pixelization every now and then, and the audio cuts out a few times. Debbie Harry looks hot in her outfit of thigh-high boots, shorts and t-shirt. During "Kidnapped," she goes into the audience (mostly sitting down) and shakes her ass in some guy's face! The band is pretty cookin', especially James Destri - pounding away like a maniac on his Farfisa. Some of the songs include the great "X-Offender", "Little Girl Lies", "In The Flesh" and the frantic "I'm On E." (AW)

(MASTERTONE/NO ADDRESS)

BLOOD OR WHISKEY "Bucharest" CD

If you like the POGUES, you'll dig this. If you don't, don't bother. Punky folk, complete with banjo, tin whistle and bouzouki. Some rockin, some more melan-



choly, all suitably stained with smoke, alcohol and regret. And yes, they are Irish. (RK)

(REJECTED RECORDS/9 WOODLAND AVE/DUN LAOGHAIRE, CO. DUBLIN/RELAND)

BLOOD-STAINED COWS

This is former ANGRY SAMOANS member GREGG TURNER's latest outfit, who play a kind of garage-acid-rock akin to the

SAMOANS' more psych period. Produced by supercool dude JEFF DAHL at his Arizona desert studio, this is fuckin' great stuff. Plop the CD in



and the first thing you hear is the crackling sound of a needle hitting a worn vinyl album, which leads into a cool cover of "You're Gonna Miss Me" (13TH FLOOR ELEVATORS). They twist and burn through a number of originals like "A-Bomb Love," "Medication (The Actifed Song)," and "Necrophilliac In Love." They also redo the old SAMOANS' number "I Lost My Mind", (replete with vacuum cleaner solos!) THE MISTAKEN (Turner's offshoot of the SAMOANS from the '80s) song "Stranded In Some Other Time" also gets reworked here to good effect The songs are all linked together by the sound of popping vinyl, which detracts slightly, but is kind of an interesting idea. (AW)

(TRIPLE X/P.O. Box 862529/Los ANGELES, CA 90086)

BOB TILTON "The Leading Hotels Of The World"CD

In reading BOB TILTON'S pompous bio, they make use of the following phrases:As the "kids in the know" scrambled to find an unsold



copy (their e.p.), The legend had already began (in reference to themselves), the infection spread beyond the tiny over-protected scene from which it was born (themselves, again). Who was the melodramatic queen who wrote this crap? Oh yes, they are "emo" and British - ironically, this does not contain enough emotion to be "emo" - or even anything close.(BB)

(SOUTHERN RECORDS/PO BOX 577375 CHICAGO, IL 60657)

BOBBYTEENS

"Fast Living and Rock and Roll"

Veterans of many fine Bay Area garage rock ensembles like The TRASHWIMMEN, MUMMIES, P H A N T O M SURFERS etc., etc...The BOBBY-



TEENS are the latest installment of super fun low-fi trash rockin. This cd packs a whallop that will leave you wanting more. I Especially liked the STONES-spoofy "Rock and Roll Show". Great live band definitely worth checking out. (JC)

(ESTRUS!/P O BOX 2125/BELLINGHAM, WA 98227)

THE BODIES "Addicted To You" CD EP

THE BODIES just don't fuckin' stop! This CD is from a session they did quite a while ago and just now got off their asses to release. After



their debut full length - which could possibly be the best record TKO has yet to put out - Abe and the crew continue to deliver the goods; I can't quite tell what it is that makes these losers so fucking great, but the record just works. Excellent almost-70's-style punk with a little early 80's So Cal thrown in for good measure! Turn this mother up loud - it'll have you pumpin' your fist and smashing a pumpkin on your mom's head before you can say "Where the fuck is Sonoma, anyway?" (IR)

(RADIO/PO 1452/SONOMA, CA/95476)

BOMBS FOR WHITEY "Time Waits For No One" CD

This thing looks totally homemade, and you gotta respect that, but the band sounds confused. Sometimes they sound like a run of the mill melodic/pop-punk band, and the rest of the time, they sound

like a fat-free version of the HUMPERS. If they make up their minds, they might not be half bad. Cool name too. (JER)



(BFW/PMB #183/1455-E FOXWORTHY AVE./SAN JOSE, CA 95.118)

BOSS 302

"Whatever Happened To Fun?" CD

Another boring hard-rockin', pseudo-garage rock CD that does nothing to float the old boat. Too many songs of total mediocrity and bore-dumb. "Whatever



Happened To Fun?" - quite the ironic title...you tell me, boys? These songs are way too long and repetitive; needless to say, they are not very "fun". In actuality, this disc is about as much fun as scraping your teeth across a cement sidewalk. (JAW)

(NO ADDRESS)

BOTTLE ROCKETS "Brand New Year" CD

This is a b s o l u t e l y horrifying. I'm not even sure how to take this...kinda like ZZ TOP, Southern-rockified, with harmonized guitars and



doubled-up vocals. This is extrememly soulless, generic, overproduced CRAPOLA!!! Put this in with your pile of JAYHAWKS records; it'll be sure to satisfy there. (JAW)

(DOOLITTLE RECORDS/POB 4700/AUSTIN, TX 78765)

BOX TOPS "Tear Off!" CD

Truth be told, I've never been a huge BOX TOPS fan. Okay, I dig "The Letter", "Cry Like A Baby" and a few other tunes, but I much prefer BIG STAR and



ALEX CHILTON'S solo stuff. 'Course Alex always said that the record company made 'em do all those wimpy songs written by other people, covered in cheesy strings 'n' horns. Well, 30 years later they reunited and cut this mostly cool album of their fave covers, except instead of wussy pop songs, they chose lots of primo R 'n' B and soul songs. This is actually pretty good. It's a little clean, but there's lots of energy, not to mention soul. Horns here and there, some female backing vox. A few of the covers are BILLY LEE RILEY'S "Flying Saucers Rock and Roll", ROY HEAD'S "Treat Her Right", EDDIE FLOYD'S "Big Bird", THE RIGHTEOUS BROS.' "Little Latin Lupe Lu" and THE GENTRYS' "Keep On Dancing", which swings the most for me. Oh, and they do "The Letter," with Chilton using his less gruff, more soulful natural voice.(AW)

(LAST CALL/223 AV. P. BROSSOLETTE, 92120 MONTROGUE, FRANCE)

BRUTAL TRUTH

"Goodbye Cruel World! Live From Planet Earth + 13" 2xCD

This is BRUTAL TRUTH's farewell offering, a double CD discography of studio and live tracks, originals, and covers with both discs hold a



total of 56 songs in all. This is a must for BRUTAL TRUTH grindcore fans. The inside of the CD jacket is a foldout that includes many fliers and photos from over the years and from all over the world. They may be history, but this release is an excellent indicator of the mark they've left behind. (AD)

(RELAPSE RECORDS/P.O. BOX 251/MILLERSVILLE, PA 17551)

BUZZCOCKS "Modern" CD

What a disappointment this was! After really liking their last studio album, 1993's "All Set", and seeing them live a couple of years



ago playing like they were on fire, I was pretty hyped for this new album. If this is "modern". I'd rather be a primitive! Most of the songs are quite lackluster - there's too much stupid techno noodling sound effects and the whole thing sounds really dry and sterile. This is more like PETE SHELLEY's awful solo work after they first broke up in the early '8os. The best songs on here are the STEVE DIGGLE-penned ones, but don't get me started on what they were thinking when they attempted a hip-hop song! A couple of these songs, "Turn Of The Screw" and "Speed Of Life" I'd heard on the recent "BBC Sessions" disc, and those versions are way more energetic than the ones on here. Pretty dire overall. (AW)

(GO KART/P.O. BOX 20, PRINCE ST. STATION/NEW YORK, NY 10012)

CASUALTIES

"The Early Years- 1990-1995" CD

The CASUAL-TIES are America's premier streetpunk band. Leaders of the drunken, spikey haired, pogopunk, old school style. This is the



definative collection of all their early work., Features all the old comp tracks, 7"s (including the mega-collectable "400z Casualties" ep) and a CD-only bonus of a full 10 song demo recording. Punk Core did an amazing job on this. The cd booklet is gorgeous, with full lyrics, recording info, all the original record covers and a shitload of full color photos.(JC)

(PUNK CORE/P O BOX 916/MIDDLE ISLAND, NY 11953)

REVIEWS

CASUALTIES "Underground Army"

The current reigning kings of the snot-nosed, drunken, spiky-haired set are back with a brilliant set of bouncy, bile spewing punk



anthems. They kick things off at a blitzkrieg pace and never look back. This CD will totally kick your ass. The strong political lyrics are carefully laid out in the extensive cd booklet. I would strongly suggest that you drop what you're doing and run out and grab this gem. (JC)

(CHARGED/PO Box 157/HIGH BRIDGE, NJ 08829)

CATHETERS "Never Look Back" CD

The final song on this CD is called "The Kids Know How To Rock". That proves definitive for these rockin' P a c i f i c Northwestern



lads. Supposedly the average band member's age is around 17. Joan Jett must have been their wet nurse and Johnny Thunders their kooky uncle with the cool record collection. The CATHETERS seemed to have been weaned on rock 'n' roll from a very early age and have it in their blood. Similar to what the BLACK HALOS are doing with a more youthful energy. (JC)

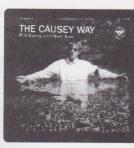
(EMPTY/PO Box 12034/SEATTLE, WA 98102)

CAUSEY WAY

"With Loving and Open Arms" CD

Great mindfuck of a record. Like PERE UBU meets the MURDER CITY DEVILS. Fantastic falsettoed, nut-job of a lead singer that warbles, hoots and preaches his own

particular take on the cult of CAUSEY. I missed these guys live and have been kicking myself ever since, I'm sure they must put on a great show. (JC)



(ALTERNATIVE TENTACLES/P.O. BOX 419092/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94141-9092)

CHESTERFIELD KINGS "Where The Action Is" CD

Remember these guys? They've been around since the late '70s, and their first few albums were amazing retrog a r a g e



"Nuggets/Pebbles/Back From The Grave" timewarp. Then they had personnel shifts and put out some bad stuff like the horrible "Berlin Wall of Sound" album. Revitalized a few years ago, they returned to their old style, put out an amazing instro-and-vocals surf record, and now this, which sounds like their earliest stuff. Almost all covers of bands like ELECTRIC PRUNES, CHOCOLATE WATCHBAND, HAUNTED, BLUES MAGOOS and STANDELLS. Great covers of THE YARD-BIRDS' "Happenings Ten Years Time Ago", THE SPIDERS' (early ALICE COOPER GROUP) "Don't Blow Your Mind" and THIRD BARDO'S "Five Years Ahead Of My Time". Lotsa fuzzed-put guitars, Vox organ, wailing blues harp and even sitar! Plus, former PAUL REVERE AND THE RADIERS singer MARK LINDSEY guests on an excellent original called "Where Do We From Here? It's great to have these guys back doing this kind of stuff again. (AW)

(SUNDAZED/P.O. BOX 85, COXSACKIE, NY 12051)

CHIMPS "Live At The Safari Club" CD

Apparently this SATAN'S PILGRIMS in disguise - featuring the drummer singing - and they do cool Northwest style garage-rock with

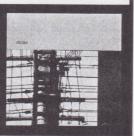


plenty of covers of NW obscurities by bands like JACK BEDIANT and the CHESSMEN, KINGSMEN, JOLLY GREEN GINATS, as well as some choice tunes by the NEW COLONY SIX, MOTOR CITY BONNEVILLES and LINDY BLASKELL and the LAVELLSs. I'm not sure if this was really recorded live (the crowd noise sounds suspiciously fake), but who cares? It's fun, organ and guitar powered fratrock fun that'll have you shakin' and shimmyin' in no time! (AW)

(MuSick Machine Records / 202 W. Essex Ave./ Lansdowne, PA 19050)

CHOKE "[foreword]" CD

hate to sound anti-Canadian (those who know me are well aware of how obsessed with the CDN I am), but I've noticed a common thread run-



ning through the records hailing from the Great White North that I've reviewed lately the musicianship is more than competant, they obviously try really hard and have some good ideas, but somehow the ideas don't translate. GUY SMILEY, WISECRACK, GOB and now CHOKE, an arty pop-punk combo with an emo edge. There's nothing particularly bad about this record, it's just that it doesn't grab you the way that feels like it should, y'know? On the other hand, the packaging is absolutely magnificent. (DGJ)

(SMALLMANRECORDS / PO BOX 362, 905 CORYDON AVE / WINNIPEG, MB CANADA R3M 3V3)

WANDA CHROME & THE LEATHER PHAROAHS

"Eleven... the Hard Way" CD

CLP" play 70's-style rock 'n' roll in a bar-band sorta way. It's pretty soso if you ask meothing here really knocks meout. They do a couple



of FLAMIN' GROOVIES covers - "Teenage Head" and "Slow Death". They also cover MC5'S "Kick out the Jams". "Slow Death" is probally the best song they do; this time around their originals don't do it. Maybe they'd be a good live band...hopefully. And hey, why isn't Wanda singing? (TL)

(SPLUNGE/SUBWAY/PO BOX 71227/MILWAUKEE, WI 53211)

CHUBBIES

"When I Was Your Girlfriend/Fox On The Run" 7"

The CHUBBIES have put out some of the finest girly-pop-punk 7"s of the last half decade. This one stands up with the best of them. Side one is



an original composition featuring all of Jeannette's hooks and harmonies. Side two is a cover of SWEET'S mega-pop hit "Fox On The Run" done with thicker melodies. Great stuff. (JC)

(REMEDIAL/NO ADDRESS)

CLASH

"From Here to Eternity: Live"

Fuck me! At first listen, one might be disappointed at a the lack of soundquality for a 1999 major-label live release. But if one stopped at first



listen, one would be pretty fucking dumb. I can (and have) listen to this record all day. There's a couple songs that fall short of their studio counterparts (most notably "Clash City Rockers"), but they're more than made up for by the sheer rip-roaringness of "Capitol Radio", the haunting expansiveness of "Armagideon Time" (featuring Mikey Dread on guest vox), and the pure explosive energy of "The Magnificent Seven". Recorded throughout their career, this is a vital document of one of punk's most vital acts. I can't begin to recommend this enough. (DGJ)

(Epic)

COMAS "Anything For Kicks" 7"

This is my favorite part of doing the magazine. Getting a random 7" from some band that I've never heard of before, and having my mind



completely blown. Four snotty as all hell punk rawk & roll numbers, very much in the LOLI & THE CHONES vein. All four songs are winners, and make this well worth mail ordering just to make sure you get one. (BAM)

(THERAPEUTIC/UNO BOX 534/NEW ORLEANS, LA 70148)

COMPUTER COUGARNo song titles given 7"

Everyone wants to rip off GANG OF FOUR these days. Who can blame them?(BB)



(GERN BLANSTEN RECORDS/PO BOX 356/RIVER EDGE, NJ 07661)

COYOTE MEN "Maskarado K.O." LP

Swank-looking picture disc from these masked English garage maniacs. Having been hipped to them through various singles and their



two CDs on the Estrus label, I knew what to expect from yet another masked-men combo. Polite these guys ain't, and even with the lo-fi recording their maniac energy and obvious sense of humor comes out. Ya gotta dig a band that covers THE ANIMALS' "I'm Cryin'" at three times its original speed! (AW)

(ROCKIN' BONES/VIA CUNEO 2-43100 PARMA ITALY 24H)

CROMAGNON "Caledonia"LP

Eurotrash
WannabeCAPTAIN BEEFHEART mess from
the late sixties.
The only time it
would be appropriate to listen to
this during a hot



'n' heavy Dungeons & Dragons adventure. There is one song which is 3 minutes of some sort of chopping and a guy screaming in agony. Maybe that was freaky back then. The first song, "Caledonia", is okay in a BIG COUNTRY-on-P.C.P. way but it's just not enough to make up for the other bullshit.(BB)

(ABRAXAS/ABRAEXP@TIN.IT)

CROOKS "Striptease" 7" EP

The CROOKS showcase trashy mid-tempo rock 'n' roll with dirty guitars and a slightly Detroitlike feel, which is the type of thing I



REVIEWS

normally love.
But the production here is a little thin, the vocals are a bit quirky, and not all the songs have enough choruses as catchy of "On



TV" and "Boring". These guys have definite potential, but as yet it's not fully developed. (JB)

(REALLY FUZZED/BOX 6170/S-10233 STOCKHOLM/SWEDEN)

DAMNED "Looking At You" 10"

This is a collection of some live songs recorded in Mulhouse, France on June 23rd, 1994. Always horrified to hear what THE DAMNED would



sound like 20 years after the fact; they're not as bad as I imagined. However, there is of course no way that they could ever be as good as they were "back in the day", (especially with Bryan James). Anyhow, they play some old staples, like "New Rose", "Smash It Up", and "Noise, Noise, Noise"— "New Rose", of course, being the best of the three songs. This is good for collectors, though to be honest, who really gives a fuck? Stick with "Damned, Damned, Damned", and you'll be fine. (JAW)

(SUDDEN DEATH/MOSCROP/POB 43001/BURNABY BC CANADA V5G 3H0)

GEORGE DARRO AND THE VIKINGS

"Viking Twist/Southern Twist" 7"

Also known as JOHNNY DOLLAR or JOHNNY VALOR to record geek collectors. Great early sixties twist rock/rockabilly. "VIKING TWIST" is a hip-shakin' instrumental with screaming saxophone. The flipside is the winner with "SOUTHERN STYLE".

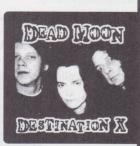
Great rockabilly reminiscent of RONNIE HAY-DOCK - Rat Phink and Boo Boo era. (TL)



(GET HIP ARCHIVE SERIES/PO BOX 666/CANONSBURG, PA 15317)

DEAD MOON "Destination X" LP

think this makes album number 10 for this lo-fi trio. They never fail to impress live, and their records are usually pretty amazing. If you're



familiar with DM, then you know what to expect: FRED and TOODY'S distinctive vocals, catchy riffs and cynical lyrics. For some reason, though, this record sounds a little muddy; a little flat, which unfortunately works to their disadvantage on this outing. Maybe it's because I've seen 'em do these songs in a live setting, what I believe is poor mastering makes them sound a little more lackluster here. (AW)

(EMPTY/POB 12034/SEATTLE, WA 98102)

DEADBOLT "Voodoo Trucker" CD

Proclaiming themselves, "the scariest band in America", these freaks just might live up to it. While none of these songs tend to stray too far from



the main formula (mid-paced songs, structured around bass reminiscent of THE CRAMPS' "Human Fly", DUANE EDDY's take on the Mancini classic TV theme, "Peter Gunn" (a.ka. the "Spy Hunter" song), mini-

malist drums just to keep the beat, clean open strummed, almost surf style guitar, and creepy ass vocals, more story telling than singing) they seem to keep your attention, almost throwing you into a trance. If you were a fan before, this slab won't disappoint. If you're not familiar with the band, you might want to check 'em out just for entertainment value. (BAM)

(HEADHUNTER/4901-906 MORENA BLVD/SAN DIEGO, CA 92117)

DEADLY SNAKES "Love Undone" CD

Okay, so this one really blew me away. Hailing from the neck of the woods where I grew up (Toronto, Canada) this six-man combo takes the



punk aesthetic and mixes in organ, piano, sax, trumpet and harmonica for a soul/Rn'B concoction that rocks like no tomorrow! Recorded with former OBLIVIANS member GREG in Toronto during the worst snowstorm in 200 years, the energy on this is fantastic. Even when they slow it down for a soulful ballad, it still sounds incredibly fresh and honest. I'll be spinning this one a lot! (AW)

(SYMPATHY FOR THE RECORD INDUSTRY/WWW.SYMPA-THYRECORDS.COM)

DEEP REDUCTION

DENIZ TEK of RADIO BIRD-MAN fame teams up with Pittsburgh's STUMP WIZARDS - JACK CHIARA, CLYDE MCGEARY and MIKE GIBLIN.



I'm a fan of the STUMP WIZARDS from way back, so I was pretty excited about this prospect. The result is lotsa fun! They do an old WIZARDS song called "One Shot Down Under," well as covers of THE VIBRATORS' "Whips & Furs". The original artist of another cover tune, "Time Will Tell", escapes me.

The rest is originals, written by Tek and the other guys, and the vocals are split between TEK, CHIARA and GIBLIN. Lots of great riffs and cool guitar sounds. There's a real garage rock-meets-'77 punk vibe going on here, and I like it a whole lot. (AW)

(GET HIP/COLUMBUS AND PREBLES AVE./PITTSBURGH, PA 15233)

DERITA SISTERS AND JUNIOR "The Derita Sisters Ain't Street" CD

This is one of those goofy joke bands like BORIS THE SPRINKLER, only 1,000 times as retarded and not half as good. Sorry, but this



just ain't too funny. (JER)

(TO THE LEFT/PO BOX 4829/BOULDER, CO 80306)

DEXTER "Watcha Doin'" 7" ep

magine a more tame CHROME CRANKS - or maybe the CRAMPS without all the raw energy - and you might get an idea of what DEXTER



sounds like. They're all right, though they would be A LOT better if they were more savage and chaotic. The title track, "Watcha Doin'", is kinda catchy, although it doesn't totally get my wheels spinning. (JAW)

(702 RECORDS/PO BOX 204/RENO, NV 89504)

DINKS "Dawn of the Dinks" CD

Super raunched-out RAMONES-style punk rock. The DINKS combine melodies and some clever choruses with a nastier guitar sound and more aggression than is common for this pop-influenced subgenre of punk. At

times they remind me of the earlier W i m p y - e r a QUEERS, which can only be a good thing, and there are a number of memorable songs on here



(including "Mental Hospital" and "Beat Your Brains Out") alongside some rather generic material. (JB)

(Meathead/Box 29024/Thunder Bay, Ontario P7B 6P9/CANADA)

DISCOUNT "Crash Diagnostic" CD

DISCOUNT are back and better than ever (and that says a lot, because I was already really fond of them). They are really growing into one



of the best bands around. The sound on this is fuller, pushing the musical boundries far further than on previous recordings. Crisp and lively production job that makes the cd really fill up the room. Early listenings of this found favorites in "Age Of Spitting" a rough-hewn beauty that churns and burns through any pretense of this band being considered pop-punk. "Areal" — Aggressive and passionate, and "Television Kiss" whose lyrics read like cool beat poetry. Future listenings should easily provide different favorites, this is a truly stellar album. (JC)

(New American Dream/PO Box 265/Balboa Island, CA 92662)

DISORDERLY CONDUCT "Love Thy Neighbor" CD

Fairly standard street-punk/Oi offering. Its not bad at all, but there is so much of this stuff coming out at the moment, that they lack that



special something to stand out from the pack (or should that be gang?). Typical lyrical fare revolving round drinking, fighting and being working class. 6 tracks in all, including a raucous cover of 'Saturday Night's Alright For Fighting." (RK)

(VULTURE ROCK/PO BOX 40104/ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87196)

DIVIT "Latest Issue" CD

6 (and a magical reworking of a TOM PETTY favorite) take DIVIT from the tried and tested NO USE FOR A N A M E / L A G



WAGON stamping grounds and into something musically a little more. It's great to hear young bands pushing at the boundaries of the genre. Devotees of melodic hardcore won't be dissapointed. Their next record is either going to be amazingly good or terrible. (RK)

(COLDFRONT/PO BOX 8345/BERKELEY, CA 94707)

DOGS

"Tough Enough"/"John Rock" 7"

THE DOGS have been faves of mine from way back when I heard their "Younger Point Of View" on the "Saturday Night Pogo" compila-



tion from 1980 on Rhino Records. You can also hear them on both "Killed By Death" vols. 1 and 18, and "Bloodstains Across California." They were originally from the Motor City but moved to L.A. eventually recording with a former member of '60s garagesters THE GRODES (of "Let's Talk About Girls" fame). These two songs were recorded live in '78, and simply shred! Great sound; I'd love to hear a whole comp. of their stuff! (AW)

(BRAIN TRANSPLANT/P.O. BOX 24310/LOS ANGELES, CA 90024-0310)

REVIEWS

DISCIPULOS DE DIONISOS "Con Pelos en la Lengua" CD

The septimes of those ultra-hedonistic parties that now seem to be



increasingly rare, you know, the kind where people are having sex in the bathtub, shooting up in the closet, and puking out the window onto the neighbor's car. They play a fiery brand of punk rock with reckless abandon that occasionally verges on TURBONE-GRO-like power. No Tomorrow strikes again. (JB)

(No Tomorrow/Apdo. 1134/12080 CASTELLON/SPAIN)

DODGE DART "So American" CD

O.K. whatcha got here is very typical boring college rock. YAWN! Sounds like this band worships MR. T, GREEN DAY, THE OUEERS and the



PARASITES. All of those bands have had some good songs here and there, but why cop their style? I can understand being heavily influenced by a band, but put some of your own originality in it PLEASE! (TL)

(Raw Power/1636 W. 139TH ST/GARDENA, CA 90249)

DRAGS "45X3" CD

This is a compilation of previously released DRAGS stuff. Most of these songs are from 7"s that are long outta print, combined with a lot of stuff that they recorded while Keith was in the band that didn't

appear on the Estrus LP's.It's got all your faves - "I Like To Die", "My Girlfriend's In the FBI" and "Mindbender". Also a great cover of THE PAGANS'



"Six and change" and THE PRETTY THINGS'
"Rosalyn". If you're a Johhny-Come-Lately to
the DRAGS then this CD is for you; it's got it
all! (TL)

(EMPTY/PO BOX 12034/SEATTLE, WA 98102)

DRIVEWAY SERVICE "Under My Hood/Let You Go" 7"

Asuperior 6ospunk release out of Australia. DRI-VEWAY SERVICE wear their r'n'r heritage on their sleeves, yet still manage to pro-



duce two fresh-sounding songs. "Under My Hood" is an uptempo rocker with a fab guitar sound and snarling 60's punk vocals, whereas the flip is slower and moodier but no less appealing. More, please. (JB)

(Wigwam/GPO Box 2366 V./Melbourne 3001/ AUSTRALIA)

DRONES "Live In Japan" CD

Awelcome domestic release of this recent DRONES CD, previously available only as a Finnish import (reviewed here a couple of issues



ago). Spirited renditions of all the this vertan bands' spiky classics from the 70s. ...Fans will definitely dig this, while the uninitiated should track down their "Further Temptations" CD, which contains their origi-

nal LP and classic 7"s (RK)

(45 REVOLUTIONS/PO BOX 2568/DECATUR, GA 30031)

DROPZONE "Pint Size Punks" CD

Pint Size" is right. The median age in this band looks to be around thirteen. They look so cute in their little EXPLOITED shirts and spiked



bracelets. Being as young as they are, their influences (namely GREEN DAY and LESS THAN JAKE) sometimes overshadow their music, but this really isn't half bad. I'd give them a few years to grow into their sound, but I could see these kids producing some worthwhile pop-punk. Does anyone remember OLD SKULL? (JER)

(SKATEKEY/446 9TH ST./BROOKLYN, NY 11215)

DUDMAN/S.S.P. Split 7"

DUDMAN hail from Tokyo, Japan and are another example of the current wave of Japanese hardcore bands. Their side of the split hosts no less



than five songs of blasting grind and powerviolence influenced hardcore. S.S.P.'s songs follow DUDMAN's lead musically, but take a hard stance on feminism and women's rights. Both bands complement each other well. (AD)

(S.O.A. Records/c/o Paolo Petralia/via Oderisi da Gubbio 67/69/00146 Roma/Italy)

DWARVES "Come Clean" CD

One of the greatest bands ever, the DWARVES, are back with another full length. After varied sounds on their previous records, I was quite curious to see what this

new offering would supply. So I drop the needle, and the first song, "How It's Done" comes through as the sugar-coated melodic punk



classic that it's sure to become, seemingly poppier than anything on their last record "The Dwarves Are Young And Good Looking", which was their "pop" album. So the second song, "River City" comes rolling around, and hits one in the face as hard as anything on "Blood, Guts & Pussy", complete with lyrics about the joys of being a rapist. So within the first two songs, they've covered the two opposite ends of their spectrum. What's next, techno? Fuck yes, and they pull it off amazingly. Three songs in, and my mind is blown. With the remainder of the album bringing on such gems as "Better Be Women", "It's Tits", and even a phone massage from a 14 year old girl bitching at Blag for not fucking her long enough - or nearly hard enough - at their last encounter, this record will easily find its way into your heart, and might quite possibly become your new favorite DWARVES record of all time. My only complaint is the fact that it clocks in at just over 20 min - I have a feeling that even if this bad boy had run twice as long, I'd be yearnin' for more. All hail, the kings of punk are far from dead! (BAM)

(EPITAPH/WWW.EPITAPH.COM)

EARLMART "Fithy Doorways" CD

Fans of PALACE BROS., PAVE-MENT, SMOG and X take notice. Exene even does guest vox. This would be great road music if I had a car.



haven't heard anything this original in this particular genre in awhile.(BB)

(WWW.DEVILINTHEWOODS.COM)

ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN/CRISPY NUTS "Titty Twister" split 7"ep

ELECTRIC FRANKEN-STEIN, featuring Rik L Rik on vocals, start this one off with a cover of the FUN THINGS' "Savage". The



flipside features a pretty goddamn good Japanese band called CRISPY NUTS. "Way" is an extremely catchy, poppy, yet raw rockn-roller with female vocals that are kinda like a sweeter Joan Jett, yet still raspy and mean sounding. "Lonely" is great too, despite the pseudo break-down near the end. Regardless, this is a surprisingly good single.(JAW)

(ROCKIN' BONES/VIA CUNEO, 2/43100 PARMA ITALY R.BONES@RSADVNET.IT)

ENEMY YOU"Where No One Knows My Name" CD

I've seen a few other mags review this record and go straight to the BAD RELIGION card. First of all, that's a very superficial way to look at this disc.



It's easy to classify almost any record out there as either a BAD RELIGION, or BLACK FLAG, or (insert other legendary band name here) copy. If one would take the time to look a little bit further into this record you'd notice that this rocks over almost anything that BR has done in quite some time, not to mention most of the stuff out today in this genre. Great hooks, good vocals, amazing execution, intelligent lyrics, and a slick-as-all-hell recording. With bands like PENNY-WISE offering half the attraction and selling a million plus copies of their records, it would be great to see people in this genre give awesome new bands like this a chance. (BAM)

(PANIC BUTTON/PO BOX 148010/CHICAGO, IL 60614)

ENGLISH DOGS

" I've Got A Gun - Live In Helsinki" | CD

Unfortunately, not a fitting testament to a superb band. This was recorded in 1995, during their last reincarnation, which had b a s i c a l l y



returned to the driving brickwall punk sound they patented along with GBH. The songs are classic, the recording is terrible. There is virtually no guitar at all in the mix. All bass and drums and vocals. For the diehard completist only. Stick with the studio material. They never did a bad record (presuming you like progressive metal as well, of course!) (RK)

(RETCH RECORDS/49 ROSE CRESCENT/WOODVALE, SOUTHPORT, MERSEYSIDE, PR8 3RZ/ENGLAND)

ENGLISH DOGS "What A Wonderful Feeling..." CD

tracks recorded in '95, and sadly, the last testament to a superb band. In their last incarnation, they managed to combine that early GBH



crunch with an occasional metallic flavor, with a healthy dose of melodic hardcore thrown in. Includes a fine updating of STIFF LITTLE FINGERS' "Wasted Life." (RK)

(RETCH RECORDS/49 ROSE CRESCENT/WOODVALE, SOUTHPORT, MERSEYSIDE, PR8 3RZ/England)

ENGRAVE

7"

ENGRAVE play modern hardcore (you could call it emo, I guess), but they definitely put their own twist in the music. Really nutty changes from quirky slow parts that switch suddenly to fast driving pieces, but it's not obnoxious in that they're not trying to outmaneuver RUSH in the musicianship depart-

REVIEWS

ment. Striking artwork. (AD)



(DEFIANCE

RECORDS/RITTERSTR.50 50668 KOLN/GERMANY)

"Born to Destroy" CD

Mid-tempo crunch guitar punk rock, with an emphasis on the rock. The EROTICS have an appealingly decadent glam punk feel, and their songs are packed



with hooks, tasteful licks, and the requisite snottiness. The production on this CD is uniformly powerful (though perhaps a tad too clean), and I suspect that live the EROTICS would sound even rawer and punkier. (JB)

(CACOPHONE/PO BOX 6058/ALBANY, NY 12206)

ESTRELLA 20/20 "Afro Mexi Cana" CD

t's all about the Young Lions conspiracy

MOTHERFUCK-ER! If you don't know that yet, you best go out and learn it. Great trashy outing on par with the OBLI-VIANS or LORD HIGH FIXERS.



Point of fact: chief LORD HIGH FIXER Tim Kerr wrestled the production job on this as well as ESTRELLA totally tearing up a version of the mighty Kerr's BIG BOYS number "Red/Green". Deep, noisy, rockin' blues. Get hip before you miss out. (JC)

(ESTRUS!/PO BOX 2125/BELLINGHAM, WA 98227)

F-MINUS "Slave Labor" CD

These guys (and girl) have done their English homework very conscientiously. Gravelly punk veering from raging thrash to more metallic GBH out-



bursts. 20 short blasts of power and rage. Tim Armstrong produced, and he certainly likes his punk made in Britain. (RK)

(HELLCAT RECORDS/2798 SUNSET BLVD/LOS ANGELES, CA 90026)

FIFI AND THE MACH 3 "New Race" 7" EP 2x10" EPs

From Japan, FIFI and her cohorts specialize in RAMONES-influenced punk, with buzzsaw guitars and lots of cool melodies. This double 10"



set compiles songs from previous releases on the 1 + 2 label, as well as some songs from comps. and some previously unavailable demos. You can't beat this stuff, with its crazed Japanese sense of mixed-up pseudo-English lyrics and songs with titles like "Get Marry," "What Fun To Be Good Ole Rock 'n' Roll," "I Like Sunday," and "My Eyes Glistened With Happiness." Plus, their covers of PETE SEEGER'S "If I Had A Hammer," PATSY CLINE'S "I Go To Pieces" and THE DICTATORS' "Back To Africa" make you wanna get up and dance. Happy, excited, nutty-style fun. (AW)

(ROCKIN' BONES NIA CUNEO, 2-43100 PARMA/TALY 24H)

"New Race" 7" EP

More fuel-injected punk with screaming female vocals. Fastest version of RADIO

BIRDMAN's "New Race" I've ever heard. Also, a cover of ROBERT GORDON'S "Too Fast To Live, Too Young To Die" that bleeds all over the original.

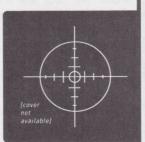


The two songs on the flipside, both originals, are no slouches, either. (AW)

(WRENCH RECORDS/BCM BOX 4049/LONDON WC1N 3XX/U.K.)

4 SKINS "Live" LP

FUCK! Another one! Here you have another Get Back! re-issue winner with the 4 SKINS' "From Chaos To 1984" LP. This starts with the slow-



rock assault of "Wonderful World" and continues onward with the anthemic "On The Streets". If your looking for toughest of the tough and the riffiest of the street-punk bands, here it is. Again, this is highly recommended not only for fans, but it is a great introductory record to a band that you should already know about. Pick this up! (IAW)

(GET BACK! PIAZZA MALTONI 16/50065 PONTASSIEVE/ FIRENZE ITALIA)

FUNNY LOOKING KIDS "Picture Day" CD

Punk-ska from S o u t h Carolina. It sounds like they're trying pretty hard and all, but this stuff just sounds like nails on a chalkboard to me. (JER)



(FASTMUSIC/401 BROADWAY #2011, NY, NY 10013)

GENERAL HAPPINESS "By Earthquake Pills"CD

Apolished YOUTH mixed with THE CURE and VERSUS. I like this but I must warn you, it really is very polished.(BB)



(MELODIYA RECORDS HEGG@CUUG.AB.CA)

GO CD

know Jeff loves the BLACK HALOS, whose album I wasn't quite as enthusiastic about. This, I think, is the best thing Sub Pop has released in



ages. Melodic, groovy - and I mean that in the best sense possible - garage rock with echoes of everything Detroit had to offer us: early rhythm & blues, Motown, high-energy proto-punk, heavy acid-rock, mid-70s powerpop etc., etc. This proves that these guys know and have soaked up the history of the town and come up with one of the catchiest, most unique sounds I've heard in awhile. While the songs cover different styles, the common element is that they rock. It's even produced in a sort of retro-without-beingredundant way, and there are actual songs with hooks galore. "You Can Get High" and "Get You Off" are the most telling song titles, as this band does both of those to me. (AW)

(SUB POP/P.O. BOX 20645/SEATTLE, WA 98102)

GOJIRA

"The 'Don't Fear the Cookie Monster' EP"

It's always a good sign when a 7" has eleven songs on it. There's a heavy SPAZZ influence both musically and lyrically on this record, which isn't a bad thing at all. The graphics are really funny with the outside being a cute drawing of Cookie Monster eat-

ing a 7" and the inside looking black metal. Fun record. (AD)



(SOAP DODGER PRODUCTIONS/634 MILLWOOD RD./TORONTO, ONT./M4SD1K8/CANADA)

GRIPS "The Grips" 7"ep

Boresville 1-4-5
garage-y riff
rock from
England. I started
this review two
days ago and still
can't get quite
through it.
Anyhow, this isn't



horrible - it is, however, pretty generic. The "highlight" of this record is the "Get Action", which is slighly reminiscent of the NEW BOMB TURKS, but not really. (JAW)

(NO LABEL INFO)

GUITAR WOLF "Jet-Generation" CD

This is the best GUITAR WOLF album yet! Each release has seen them getting better, doing more vocal tunes and absorbing more of a '70s punk



influence. I think the album title is a homage to JOAN JETT, and I can actually understand a lot of what they're singing on this one. This one is almost totally vocal-oriented and is stuck in a '77 timewarp, with decent but not overly slick production. All the instruments come crashing out, but it's not as insanely distorted as especially their earlier records. Great song titles, too, like "Fujiyama Attack", "Teenage U.F.O.", "Gakulan Rider" and "Cyborg Kids." Oh, and wait'll ya hear their cover of "Summertime Blues". (AW)

(MATADOR/625 BROADWAY/NEW YORK, NY, 10012)

GUTTERSNIPE

"Never Surrender, Never Give In"
7" EP

First-rate
Swedish Oi on
the great
Austrian-based
DSS label. This
record's got
everything any
self-respecting Oi
scout could want,



including a heavy guitar sound, lots of power, catchy songs, irresistable singalong choruses, and somewhat dopey lyrics. The title song is fabulous, and the rest are nearly as good. (JB)

(DSS/233 ABOTT STREET #606/VANCOUVER, BC V6B 2K7/CANADA)

H.K. PEGAR

"A La Chingada Con Los Traidores"
7"

Growly, grinding midtempo hardcore
from France. The
copy I'm listening
to skips a lot,
which doesn't
help the low quality recording.
(AD)



(PANX/BP5058-31033/TOULOUSE CEDEX 5/FRANCE)

HAGFISH "On KROQ's Loveline" CD

No music. But 65 minutes of the boys in the band doing their thing on Loveline - a call-in sex advice radio show. I suspect this is only for



serious fans (of either HAGFISH and/or Loveline). Limited to 1000, so if you fall into either category, snap it up quick. (RK)

(COLDFRONT/PO BOX 8345/BERKELEY, CA 94707)

REVIEWS

HAGFISH

"That Was Then, This Is Then" CD

Acollection of unreleased and underreleased tracks from 4991-1998. A trifle annoying, as there is no information as to where the tracks



are originally from. Nevertheless, the quality is excellent throughout. The converted will want this, anyone else who appreciates the melodic driving pop-punk of the ALL/DESCENDENTS axis will similarly appreciate this sterling collection. Includes their version of the UNDERSTONES classic "Teenage Kicks." (RK)

(COLDFRONT/PO BOX 8345/BERKELEY, CA 94707)

HEARTDROPS "East Side Drive" LP

It might be a stretch to ask one to imagine this, but picture Tim from AVAIL singing SOCIAL DISTORTION songs. If you're able to pull that



off mentally, then you're rocking out to the HEARTDROPS. I wish I could come up with a different description, but this one pretty much nails it. What a fun record! Check it out, you won't be disappointed. (BAM)

(MELTED/21-41 34TH AVE SUITE 10A/ASTORIA, NY 11106)

THE HEATSCORES "Light 'EM Up!!" CD

Judging by the "look", I thought this was going to be super cheesy, generic hot rod swill. However, this is actually some all right surf stuff/hot rod rock-n-roll/psychobilly. Whatever the fuck you wanna call it, it's a hodgepodge of styles. Anyhow, the most unfortunate aspect of this band is the part

that cripples this record; there is no fucking lead singer!!! To say that this CD is missing something is an understatement...you keep waiting and



waiting, and it never happens. The surfier songs (ie: "The Spiderwalk"), sound like they should be instrumentals, but "Knife Fight At The Wier" SHOULD HAVE VOCALS. Overall, this is nothing you haven't heard already a million itmes before (and better)...and with a goddamn singer when it was needed! (JAW)

(GODDAMN RECORDS/POB 7833/SASKATOON, SK S7K 4R5)

HELLRIDE "Shit Faced And Pissed Off" 7"

MOTÖRHEAD influenced Scandinavian rock just never seems to get old for some reason. That's a perfect description of the title track. The B-



side, "Darkness" comes in more of an AC/DC form, yet still pissed as all hell. The only thing that keeps me from calling this "perfect" is the fact that two songs are only enough to get you going. I suggest that all you rockers out there hunt this down, and then we can all sit around together and wait for more from these guys. (BAM)

(RADIO BLAST/PO BOX 160 380/DUSSELDORF GERMANY)

HERS NEVER EXISTED "A Static State Of Developmental Disability" CD

All-girl political punk band from the East Bay area. SPITBOY comes to mind as a comparison, but only vaguely. Roster of punk luminaries from many previous Gilman St. bands. The music is driving and interest-

ing, while the lyrics, sometimes sung, sometimes screamed are powerful and cover the issues. (JC)



(New Disorder/445 14th Street/San Francisco, CA 94103)

HILLSIDE STRANGLERS "Greetings From Detroit" 7"

First of all, I'd just like to say that there is no need to put a graphic photo of a decapitated body on your 7" cover. What we have here is some



sloppy, trashy punk rock n' roll from Detroit with a decent original, and a so-so version of the oft covered "Strychnine" by the SONICS. I can't say it sucked, but it didn't really stop my clock either. (JER)

(DETROIT NOISE/1217 GRISWOLD/DETROIT, MI 48226)

HOLDING ON/THE REAL ENEMY Split 7"

Both bands are from the Twin Cities. Good straightedge music with lyrics regarding scene politics, trying to escape the rat race, and being



an older punk in the scene. It's nice to see a label expanding their releases into other genres of hardcore. (AD)

(HAVOC RECORDS/P.O. BOX 8585/MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55408)

HOOKERS

"BLACK MAGIC STALLION" 7"ep

REALLY like this first track, "Black Magic Stallion"...it's got a great metal-y riff, and

a super catchy, ballsy chorus. To top it off, they tear through SPINAL TAP's "Tonight I'm Gonna Rock You Tonight" and they absolutely rip the



shit out of THE DOGS' "Slash Your Face". Fucking Great.(JAW)

(DEVIL DOLL RECORDS/POB 30727/Long Beach, CA, 90853)

HOOKERS

"Black Visions Of Crimson Wisdom" LP

This is pretty g o d d a m n metal...in the truest, most classic, mid -eighties, yet semi-70's stoner-ish rawk kinda way. Sorta a bit VENOM.



sorta a bit MAIDEN, sorta a bit SABBATH...like I said, pretty metal. Even though, I pledge by the HOOKERS, till death do us part, I have to say, I personally prefer their earlier stuff - Despite this, I do believe this is a good record; it's chock full of some really nice riffs and the songs fucking rip (ie: "Ball Crusher Love Machine"). I do think, however, I would have been more into some of this about 15 years ago. (JAW)

(SCOOCH POOCH RECORDS/5850 3RD ST. #209/LA,CA 90036)

HOOKERS

"Halloween" 7"

This is worth picking up just for the sleeve, a hilarious reproduction of the M I S F I T S "Halloween" 7" on Plan 9. The Aside is, of course,



"Halloween" by the MISFITS ala the HOOK-ERS (which means gruff vocals, and played in such a manner as to induce drinking). I'm pretty sure that the B-side is an original, and quite possibly one of the best HOOKERS songs to date. Fast, catchy aggressive punk & roll. These 2 songs roll by pretty fast, but I still feel that it's worth picking up. (BAM)

(BLACK LUNG/PO BOX 39278/LOUISVILLE, KY 40233)

NOT HOT "Party Rock Vol. 1 " CD

The name is definitely appropriate here. Oh boy...this takes the cake! How the hell do I describe this? There're eight people in the



band. Two girls and six guys. They sound like a high school chorus class that's decided to start a geeky punk band. I do give them points for not following the trend and just letting themselves totally geek out, but please, help me out here - let me know if they're serious or not. If they are, then as I said, OOOOHHH BOY! (TL)

(SCARY/NO ADDRESS)

IGNITION 13 "Indeed" CD

This is mostly mid-tempo, sludgy, distorto-rock. There is also nothing that memorable about this disc. It's not offensivly horrifying, yet it's noth-



ing to write home about either. Which is worse? It's just pretty forgettable. Oh, I think these guys are Canadian. (JAW)

(CHAMISS SOUNDS/332 W. 15TH AVE./VANCOUVER B.C. CANADA V5Y 1Y2)

INSULTS "Insults To Injury" LP

egit compilation of poppy-punk stuff from a band that's been featured on both "Killed By Death" and the "Bloodstains" bootleg series. You may recognize "I'm Just A Doper" and "Population Zero." Pretty fun stuff, including punky versions



of THE YARDBIRDS' "For Your Love", THE ROLLING STONES' "The Last Time" and PAUL REVERE AND THE RAIDERS' "Steppin' Out". They also covered thencurrent band THE DILS' "Class War." Too bad their cover of "White Riot" cuts out midway through. Other than that, thoroughly enjoyable with great songs like "Her Daddy Was An S.S. Man" and "I'm So Twisted." (AW)

(BRAIN TRANSPLANT/P.O. BOX 24310/LOS ANGELES, CA 90024-0310)

INTREPID A.A.F. "Songs Of Battle" 7"ep

Overall - just as with many of his previous efforts - Orlando X delivers the goods with his solid new band, INTREPID A.A.F. This is fucking



great aggro streetpunk with a bit of a hardcore edge. The first track, "S.O.S", is good, "Common Man" is catchy and tuff...but the extra bonus is SPECIAL FORCES' "Make The Leaders Fight" - it's fucking excellent fistsin-the-air punk rock-n-roll. (JAW)

(CHEETAH'S RECORDS/POB 4442/BERKELEY, CA 94704-0442)

JACKBEAST/SPITHEAD split 7" EP

The JACKBEAST are from Dublin and remind me of SLINT. I heard they are good live.SPITHEAD is ska from England trying to be THE SPECIALS.(BB)



REVIEWS

(KOLLUSION RECORDS/PO BOX 2717 HARLOW ESSEX CM18 6SQ ENGLAND)

JAMES DEAD "Revenge" CD

Heavy on the guitar and rock edge, witha hint of "psychobilly", JAMES DEAD is that stereotypical goateed, sunglass-wearin',



evil-satan-worshipping rawk band. These guys are too contrived for me, and again, too mediocre; leaning to the suck-ass side. They also succeed in slaughtering "Sonic Reducer". Joy. (JAW)

(DRY RIVER BED RECORDS/5425 E. BROADWAY BLVD 192/Tuscon, AZ 85711)

JAYBEE AND THE KATS "Tension/When School is Through"

Side one is a surfy track very reminiscent of the VENTURES (Liner notes will explain full details of VENTURES connection). Side



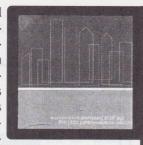
two is fairly forgettable light pop in more of a JAN AND DEAN vein. A fun enough record, but I'm not really sure if they needed re-issuing. (JC)

(GET HIP/PO BOX 666/CANONSBERG, PA 15317)

JAZZ JUNE "Breakdance Suburbia" CD

One thing I can't stand about so many socalled modern "emo" records is the fact that 19 year old boys who sit around in cafés think that because Blake Schwarzenbach and Guy Picciotto were (and are) literate,

e m o t i o n a l singers and songwriters that it justifies their own cutesy pseudointellectual songs about the horrors of being a postadolescent/pread-



ult. JAWBREAKER and RITES OF SPRING were two of the greatest bands to ever grace indie/punkdom with their presence. THE JAZZ JUNE, on the other hand, aren't exactly terrible, but the music doesn't seem to go anywhere despite the myriad musical changes. Sort of the Nordic-Track approach to songwriting, I suppose. (DGJ)

(INITIAL/PO BOX 17131/LOUISLVILLE, KY 40217))

JILTED

"la mia realta" 7"

really admire the people at S.O.A. Records because they put out SO many records by SO many different bands. I can't understand any of



JILTED's lyrics as they are written in their native Italian, but musically, the band plays hardcore punk that's melodic yet strong.

(S.O.A. RECORDS/VIA ODERISI DA GUBBIO 67/69/00146 ROMA/ITALY)

JUGHEAD'S REVENGE "Pearly Gates" CD

The umpteenth release for this stalwart So-Cal outfit, a band that is consistently good, but never amazing. One of the big problems that I



have with this group is that I have heard or owned like four of their records and I can't remmember a single song that they do. Fans of the band probably won't be disappointed, as it seems solid enough. The high point for me is the strong, brave lyrical content exhibited on tracks like "Kill Security Now", "You Never Know" and "Anthem". (JC)

(NITRO/7071 WARNER AVENUE SUITE F-736/HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA 92647)

JUNE of 44 "In The Fishtank" CD

JUNE OF 44 continue to build upon the indierock foundations laid on previous gems. Compare to the mellower elements of FUGAZI or SONIC YOUTH.



Churning, dramatic music sprinkled with sparse vocal enlightenment. (JC)

(KONKURANT ONAFHANKELIJK MUZIEKBEDRIJF/P O BOX 14598/1001 LB AMSTERDAM, NL)

KEVIN K BAND "Party Down" CD

Weak outing from some-body I'm told is capable of doing a lot better. 1996 release for them, so lets just give them the benifit of the doubt that



it must have been a bad year. The music is pretty rockin' in the classic New York fashion, but the singing and lyrics are pretty wounded. Also has one of the hooptiest covers that I've seen in a long time. Don't "Party Down" with KEVIN K, search out other releases. (JC)

(NO ADDRESS)

KEVIN K BAND

"Rule The Heart" CD

ONY THUNDERS and THE HEARTBREAK-ERS, KEVIN K takes it a step further... This is kinda where I don't really wanna go regarding a bunch of classic seventies r-n-roll. This is like when the BEATLES (who I fucking hate anyhow) spawned too many generations of crappy



pop bands....get it? Overall, this is pretty boring glam rock with too many guitar leads...I don't care if he opened up for SYL SYLVAIN or even the WALDOS. Each song tends to blend into the next, and the lyrics are pretty gay. (JAW)

(NO ADDRESS)

KILL THE HIPPIES "Shit-Covered Hits" 7" EP

Agaragey punk record with shrill female vocals and that obnoxio-retardo vibe typical of Midwestern exemplars of that genre. The songs

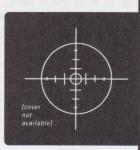


here range from truly inspired 77ish punkers like "Prostitution" and "I'm Gonna Puke on You" to quirky WEIRDOS-style stuff like "Destroy All Musicians". Needless to say, I'd prefer it if they concentrated on the former. (JB)

(ROCK ACTION/10825 SPRINGFIELD ROAD/POLAND, OH 44514)

KNIGHTS "I Don't Need You" LP

Also known as K I N G RICHARD and the KNIGHTS, these New Mexico cats started off as a fairly innocuous instro band before adding



vocals and becoming a more Northwest style garage band. The record starts with four instros in a SHADOWS/VENTURES style, but really kicks into high gear when they add vocals to tunes like "I Want To Love You".

Most of the tunes have a real Northwest rock sound (think RAIDERS, WAILERS and SON-ICS), perhaps due to the organ and sax that are so predominant in band's mix. Then there's the cool "Those Things You Do" and "I Don't Need You" - a real garage pounder with uncharacteristic falsetto vocals on the chorus! Other tunes, like "Work Out Sally" and "That's The Way It Goes" drip that kind of manic energy garage lovers so desire. Although it doesn't mention any recording dates, two songs at the end are from the early '80s, are recorded in a lo-fi, grotty sound not dissimilar to their '60s stuff. (AW)

(D.C. RECORDS/POB 1140/96115 MEMMELSDORF, GERMANY)

KNOTTS "The Crowd Loves It" 7" EP

What a great punk record. The music is fast, snotty, lo-fi and abrasive. A three song, one-sided 7" with a photocopied cover hand numbered #168 of



200. Now that's the D.I.Y. spirit, kids. Keep them coming, Star Time! (JC)

(STAR TIME/P O Box 43091/Tuscon, AZ 85733)

KOSHER

"Bored In America" 7" EP

Four songs of impatiant youth in a '77 via S W I N G I N ' UTTERS / U.S. BOMBS style. Instantly catchy and boiling with excitement. The



more I listen to this the more I like it. "Bottle Caps" is a standout track. Limited edition of 398 so get yours quick. (JC)

(SKULLDUGGERY/77 SCITUATE AVENUE/SCITUTE, MA 02066-3561)

LAWNDARTS "Volume 2" CD

Afine batch of Jersey-flavored pop punk. Comes across equal parts QUEERS and LILLINGTONS, although not quite as good as



either. The songs on here are best when they are under two minutes. A good band that could have really benefitted from a less retarded looking record cover. (JC)

(LAWNDARTS/538 FRANKLIN TERRACE/WYCKOFF, NJ 07481)

LEXINGTONS/HABITUALS split 7"

The LEXINGTONS sound just like NOTHING COOL, complete with great hooks, gruff vocals, and perfectly imperfect execution. All in all, great snotty pop punk. Even though they share common members, HABITUALS come with quite a

different sound.
Their first song is
more of a polished SCREECHING WEASEL
sound, with the
follow up number
being more of a
rock & roll influ-



enced pop number. All in all, an enjoyable listen. (BAM)

(SELF RELEASED/807 NW 3RD AVE/GAINESVILLE, FL 32601)

LEWD

"Lewd Conduct In A Public Place!" LP

Recorded live
At the
Mabuhay in '80,
this is a legit riproaring live document of one of
the best punk
bands ever.
They're intro-



duced as being "from Seattle", though I know they were living in San Francisco at the

REVIEWS

time. SATS on vox, BLOBBO still on guitar, BOB CLIC on bass, and CARL SOCKO on the drums. Pretty good sound - they sound a little ragged here and there, but, hey, that's punk rock. Besides, it was only Bob's second show with the band! Beyond faves like "Lewd Conduct," "Climate Of Fear," "Kill Yourself," "Trash Can Baby" and "I'm Not Pretty," they do great punked-out versions of the SONICS' "Boss Hoss" and CHER'S "Bang Bang." (AW)

(VAMPIR/P.O. BOX 1098/MANSFIELD, OH 44901)

LOMBEGO SURFERS "Get Lost" 7" EP

An oddity. The title song is a stellar example of belligerent German punk 'n' roll with that always appealing DEAD BOYS influence, and who among us can't



relate to its sentiments, especially when they're delivered with such a large helping of vocal vitriol and sneer? The other three cuts are crunch guitar instrumentals with pronounced surf overtones, which I guess helps to account for the band's name. (JB)

(FLIGHT 13/NORDSTRASSE 2/D-79104 FREIBURG/GER-MANY)

LOOKERS

"We Killed Rock 'n' Roll" 7" EP

This sounds like a quintessential Rip Off label release, but instead it's a very limited edition self-produced record. Yup, the LOOKERS are a



trashy, lo-fi, 77-influenced garage punk outfit with simultaneously snotty and satirical lyrics. The super title track is not unlike a sloppier LOLI & THE CHONES number, but

the EP is otherwise composed of less catchy p-rock numbers and a couple of garagey surf-style instrumentals. (JB)

(LOOKERS/PO BOX 12714/GREEN BAY, WI 54307)

LORD HIGH FIXERS

"Is Your Club A Secret Weapon" CD

This is revolution rock. The kind of gritty blues punk that Jon Spencer might have played if he hadn't sold his soul to the devil for fame, fortune,



and the love of Christina. High praise to the Fixers and their great record. Carrying on fine tradition laid down by POISON 13 and JACK'O'FIRE, they get a little jazzier and experimental at times, but never lose track of the brown dirt basics of real rock 'n' roll. (JC)

(ESTRUS!/P O Box 2125/BELLINGHAM, WA 98227)

LOST

"Lost Tapes, 1965-'66" CD

When considering the merits of Boston beat lords the LOST, it's safe to say any of their mid-sixties sides for Capitol Records



would've distinguished themselves fittingly on Rhino's "Nuggets" box set of a few seasons back. The good news is that they are all here (finally), from the sneering folk-rock of "Maybe More Than You" and first-class ravers "Mean Motorcycle" and "Back Door Blues", to the thoroughly red-hot instro, "No Reason Why". For those that already own the singles, this set is less necessary, as it leans often on jarringly gentle material. (JJ)

(ARF! ARF!/PO BOX 465/MIDDLEBOROUGH, MA 02346)

OUT

"Raleigh's Finest" 7" EP

Generally uptempo Yank Oi from North Carolina. This EP has a raw but overly trebly production, and the LOUTS wisely don't try to affect



pseudo-Cockney accents to give themselves dubious "street" credibility. My fave tracks are the mid-tempo "Drunk in the Streets" and the faster "Never Give In". (JB)

(Murder & Mayhem/1500 Miriam Street/Garner, NC 27529)

LUVD ONES "Truth Gotta Stand" CD

If they'd played one of Z-man's happenings; he would've been freaking out to this band. Kitchy 60's girl psychpop band. Cool for eye candy or a



joke listen or two, but no real lasting appeal. (IC)

(SUNDAZED MUSIC/P O BOX 85/COXSACKIE, NY. 12051)

MAD "I Wanna Be A Devil" 45

Very odd lyrics from this band, "Eyeball, eyeball, stupid eyeball, water's laughter..." I don't get it. I believe THE MAD is from Japan, but



there is no address for them anywhere on this. Musically, it kind of reminds me of THE CRAMPS because of the guitarist's playing style. It's different. (AD)

(Brain Transplant/P.O. Box 24310/Los Angeles, CA 90024-0310)

MAD "1978" EP

Chances are you are probably familiar with THE MAD if you have been keep-



ing up with the ever-popular KILLED BY DEATH records as well as the various other compilations which have thankfully made those hard to find (and extrememly expensive singles) available to the oft-times poor public. Another great release of this ilk is THE MAD'S "1978EP" which has been made available by Brain Transplant in LA. If you are into arty, noisy, off the wall, trashy rocknroll, then you should check this out. This record includes a variety of MAD songs, and a great, informative booklet on the history of the MAD and the other related bands. (JAW)

(Brain Transplant Records/POB 24310/LA, CA 90024-0310)

MAIN STREET SAINTS "Everybody Wants To Go To Heaven" CD

Fairly nondescript skinhead songs about fighting, drinking, fighting 'cos you're drunk, drinking 'cos you fight etc etc. Unfortunately,



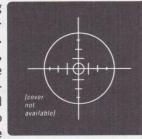
the only anthem present is a cover of COCK SPARRER's "England Belongs To Me," with lyrics suitably changed, to reflect, well,I guess that England doesn't belong to them. Kind of shows up the lack of imagination in the original material. (RK)

(GMM/PO Box 15234/ATLANTA, GA 30333)

MANSFIELDS

"Sappy Songs For Summer Nights"
CD

If you like RAMONES, QUEERS or SCREECH-ING WEASEL, you'll probably dig this. It's pretty derivative of that bag, and they all use the last name MANSFIELD. The interesting thing is that the bassist sometimes plays a stand-up, giving them an additonal rockabilly vibe. For the most part, their songs are catchy, fun singalong stuff, and they seem to have a real sense



of humor about what they're doing, as evidenced by the balding drummer who sports a hilarious JOEY RAMONE style wig in some of the CD's booklet pics. Plus, they do a song called "Jayne Mansfield Was A Punk." (AW)

(BLAST OFF RECORDS USA/P.O. BOX 10464, COLORADO SPRINGS, CO 80932)

MASSIVE FERGUSON "Tractivore" CD

Another odd one. The music is pretty basic mid-tempo h e a v y punk/hardcore (with a singer that at times sounds uncanni-



ly like Ozzy Osbourne), but there's more going on here. A lot of the song titles have the band's name in them, like "The Reason MF Hates Your Butler" and "MF vs. Spiderman", and the liner notes are a bunch of gibberish about ridding your garden of common pests and crazy shit like that. I think there may be some sort of concept here, but since I don't know what they're going for, I can't tell you if they accomplished it or not. As far as the music goes, it didn't really do anything for me. (JER)

(CATCH AND RELEASE/8419-7TH ST. S.W./CALGARY, AB T2V 1G8/CANADA)

MAZINGA CD

This is ultra-boring power-chord rock, with a crooner of a vocalist. These songs are really guitar heavy and range from semigothy ("Satana") to the 70's rock of "Omega Race", to the poppy ooohs and ahhhhs of the MISFITS-y "Namorita"...It's like you can tell the influences are there, but they come

out in all the wrong ways. Plus, there are way too many wanky leads, way too many song parts, the whole thing is way too polished-sounding. (JAW)



(REANIMATOR RECORDS/POB 1582/ANN ARBOR, MI 48106)

MC5 "66 Breakout" CD

The holy grail for MC5 fans has arrived! Countless reissues concentrating on the 5's hienergy later years (many great), have been issued



- but here's their earliest, crudest beginning as a total YARDBIRDS/WHO/THEM inspired garage band. A mixture of live and studio material - some culled from rehearsals in guitarist WAYNE KRAMER'S parents' basement . Lotsa fuzz and the beginnings of experiments with feedback guitar, plus a healthy dose of grungey soul influence show through on these versions of songs like "Black To Comm," "Looking At You," "I Just Don't Know," "Baby Please Don't Go," "I'm A Man" and "I Can Only Give You Everything." Sound varies from track to track due to lo-fi recording methods but regardless, the energy and awesome power that was the 5 comes across well. (AW)

(Total Energy/Bomp! P.O. Box 7112, Burbank, CA 91510)

MILEMARKER "Futurisms"CD

love this. The first track reminds me of ADD N TO X then they get all CAP'N JAZZ-like. This shit is mad and hypnotic with a great use



REVIEWS

of repetition and space. A gem.(BB)

(MILEMARKER/307 BLUERIDGE ROAD, CHAPEL HILL, N.C. 27510)

MR T EXPERIENCE "Alcatraz" CD

guess it had to happen. After ten or so pretty classic pop-punk records, the boys found the need to 'move-on' musically. Or, in this case, move back.



It sounds like they were trying to cover the best of the classic "Nuggets" compilation of 'garage' bands from the 6os. Bands desperately trying to sound like the BEATLES. They sort of sound like a poor-man's version of SWEET or even ELVIS COSTELLO. It's not necessarily bad, but it does sound like they are foundering somewhat in trying to pinpoint a new sound, or direction even. (RK)

(LOOKOUT!/PO BOX 11374/BERKELEY, CA 94712)

"The Big Sound Of" CD

BILLY CHILDISH meets SYD BAR-RETT-style stripped-down rock-n-roll, and I mean way stripped down! Some of thes CD is okay - "It's Your Time", "Can't Keep



It Together", "Anything You Can Afford", "Higher and Higher", and "What Tommorow Brings" are all pretty good. I guess his thing is probally raw and shitty production, but I personally think that if it was recorded better it would probably really rock! I'm not knocking home recordings or anything; I just think there are some good songs on here that need to be heard better, that's all. (TL)

(MOD HOLLAND ENTERPRISES/1927 HENNEPIN AVE #3/MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55403)

MURDER

"Murder"/"Chainsaw Love" 7"

MURDER were a short-lived band that featured VKTMS singer NYNA CRAWFORD and LEWD guitarist BOB CLIC. This was recorded in



'82, and is heavy as fuck, kinda like a more punk BLUE CHEER, with female vocals. Slightly metallish wah-wah guitar but still raw enough to make it powerful stuff. (AW)

(Broken Rekids/P.O. 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146)

MURDER CITY DEVILS/ GLUECIFER split 7" EP

Two songs by each band here. MURDER CITY DEVILS do a really cool original called "In This Town" with lyrics that I can totally identify with, and



a strange version of THE SEEDS' "Can't Seem To Make You Mine" which has the piano and organ up really high in the mix. This choice of cover was completely unexpected by me, but they really make it their own. Did you know SKY SAXON was living here in Seattle for awhile? I even saw him shopping at a grocery store once! GLUECIFER - whom I really get off on - contribute a good original called "Rock And Roll" - now there's an original title! Their cover is TED NUGENT's "Just What The Doctor Ordered," which is better than the original, but no big deal. (AW)

(SUB POP/P.O. BOX 20645/SEATTLE, WA 98102)

MUSTANG

"Drunken Stars Of The Revolution"

Toe tappin, booze-soaked Australian rock n' roll with balls & hooks. There's a little metal thrown in there, but it's not overpowering. Sort of



like NASHVILLE PUSSY with a singer instead of a screamer. The wah-wah pedal gets a bit tiresome, but overall, I approve. (JER)

(Full Toss/PO Box 4171/Richmond East Vic. 3121/Australia)

MUTHAFUCKIN BROWNS/ JOHN Q PUBLIC split 7"

MFB play some good punk rock here, reminiscent of early-day RIP OFFS from S.F; nice and loose with lots of attitude - shit, they



even wear the black ski masks so we can't see their ugly faces! Thanks guys. I was a little supprised with JOHN Q PUBLIC; I thought they would suck balls due to that lame cartoon on the sleeve, but they play pretty decent poppish punk with a few harmonies. The vocals, however, snarl just enough to take this past the generic pop sound. Not bad.(IR)

(MIDDLE MAN/PO 4606/LAFAYETTE, IN/47903)

MY THREE SCUM "Night Of The Living Scum" CD

Breakneck
speed version
of the MISFITS
with a scandalous
hint of REVEREND
HORTON HEAT.
Mediocre
wannabes at
best. The songs



are so over-horror show-stylized at times that the singer sounds like he's doing a DANZIG scat parody. (JC)

(EERIE/NO ADDRESS)

NAÏVE

"Post-Alcoholic Anxieties" CD

Top-notch PIS-TOLS-style punk rock from Russia with snooty vocals, catchy choruses, and heavy guitars. Various incarnations of



NAÏVE have been rockin' out for nearly fifteen years, since well before the collapse of the Soviet Union, but I think this new album may be the best thing they've ever done. It's got a nice ballsy sound and a good bit of vitriol, which is hardly surprising given the widespread dissatisfaction with the existing Russian kleptocracy. (JB)

(ARROW/5209 MONTEREY ROAD #666/LOS ANGELES, CA 90042)

NEW BOMB TURKS/ONYAS split 7"

guess this was released to accompany these two bands on their Aussie tour earlier this year. One song from each band, both in their typical lo-



fi trashed out garage rock n' roll fashion. Though I've definitely heard better from the ONYAS, their song has a charm of its own. All in all, it's worth picking up if you can find it. (BAM)

(FULL TOSS/PO BOX 4171/EAST RICHMOND/V1C 3121, AUSTRALIA)

NEW YORK WHORES "Play the Fool/Kiss Me!" 7"

y favorite new release this time around. The N.Y. WHORES have a powerful old school glam-punk sound marked by tasteful guitar playing, big fat hooks, and melodic yet snotty lead vocals. Both songs really rock, and I espe-



cially like the added female background vox on "Kiss Me". Rapid Pulse scores big again! (JB)

(RAPID PULSE/PO BOX 5075/MILFORD, CT 06460)

NY WHORES "Piss Off" 7"

Any of these songs could be straight offa any KILLED BY-DEATH comp, specifically "Piss Off". Never heard of these guys before, but I



wanna hear more. Totally shitty production, the vocals are too loud, the guitar isn't loud enough (until side two), the bass is barely audible, and the drums are way up front. The production is just completely wrong. Ha! I would surprised if this took more than an hour to record. Right on! File along side of DICK DASTARDLY and THE CLONE DEFECTS....fucking great! (JAW)

(Incognito Records/Senefelderstr. 37A/70176 Stuttgart, Germany)

9 SHOCKS TERROR

absolutely love
9 SHOCKS TERROR. They're
Ohio's one
remaining saving
grace. This 7"
smokes from
start to finish.
Punishing, fast



hardcore that's tweaked and twisted. (AD)

(HAVOC RECORDS/P.O. BOX 8585/MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55408)

NOFX "The Decline" CDEP

ove always had a sneaking suspicion that Fat Mike harbored a secret desire to be the Steve Harris of punk. Finally, here's the definitive proof



and it's fucking brilliant. After the last couple NOFX tracks I've heard on comps and singles, I was worried they were losing it, but no...here it is - an indisputable document that proves that NOFX deserve every ounce of success they've got. Eighteen minutes long; one song, multiple mini-movements, some truly fucking insane musicianship (I'm thinkin' that Mike might also want to be the Billy Sheehan of punk), not to mention random yells and screams throughout the whole thing. Parts of it harken back to "The Longest Line"-era, others tread similar ground to their last LP, and some of it, well, some of it's just out there. If you haven't picked up a NOFX record in awhile, this is definitely the one to check out. Fuck me...this thing (and NOFX's seventeen someodd-year career) is probably summed up best like this: "Long, loud and snotty." Buy it. (DGI)

(FAT/PO BOX 193690/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94119)

NOODLE MUFFIN "Teaspoons Of Sin" CD

WEEZER'S
inbred,
lobotomized
cousin. The music
sucks, the lyrics
suck, the cover
art sucks, and the
song titles suck.
For example:
"Stoopid Pigs".



"Bacon", "Herpe the Love Bug", "Lesbian Love Chicks" and "Eat My Stool". Why not just write songs about poo-poo and pee-pee instead of causing great strain to the brain to come up with "Funky Pig Maggot"? (BB)

REVIEWS

(HOMEL.GFE.NET/NOISE/)

NOTHINGS "A Lot To Learn" CD

Wow! This little 7-songer rocks. Now I know why the original vinyl of this goes for so damn much money.C atchy, mid tempo rockers. Upon first lis-



ten I thought it sounded almost SEX PISTOLish; surprise surprise, produced by Steve Jones. So anyone who wishes that the PISTOLS had left us with an extra 7 great tunes - which should be everybody - pick this thing up. (BAM)

(Augustus/22287 Mulholland Hwy #304/Calabasas, CA 91302)

TED NUGENT "Great Gonzos" CD

w a n g o , you get zee tango!" Oh my God. Why did this need to happen again? Re-issue of the "Nuge's" 1980 greatest hits package plus new



bonus tracks. Features all the classic rock favorites like "Cat Scratch Fever", the aforequoted "Wango Tango" "Wang Dang, Sweet Poontang" etc. Once the initial cheese entertainment value wears off, you're left with a pretty pathetic bunch of uninspired drivel that was outdated back in 1980 when this came out the first time. The new track on the album sounds like something from a Skittles commercial or something that would be played behind Monday Night Football highlights. The best thing Terrible Ted ever did was the AMBOY DUKES. Where are those reissues? (JC)

(SONY)

OBLIVION "Sweatpants USA" CD

The latest full-length from these Chicago veterans. On this outing, OBLIVION

sound even less punk, and more anthemic CHEAP TRICK style poprock. Or an ELVIS COSTELLO propelled along with a vigorous boot to the posterior. Great title too. (RK)



(SUBURBAN HOME/PO BOX 40757/DENVER, CO 80204)

OBLIVIANS "Best Of The Worst" CD

Three guys, three guitars, three sets of drumsticks and a whole lotta rock and roll mischief. Absolutely essential record of the week. Captures



25 tracks spanning the bands career from 1993-1997. Not a dud in the bunch. Compare to a bluesier, dirtier NEW BOMB TURKS. I went out and bought this one for review. I couldn't take my chances on their Sypathetic Majesty's promo list sending it to us and having to win the ensuing wrestling death match amongst the Hit List reviewers that it would have caused. Also features the best OBLIVIANS (or possibly anybody's) record cover yet. (JC)

(SYMPATHY FOR THE RECORD INDUSTRY /www.sympathyrecords.com)

ONE FINE DAY "What We share" CD EP

Even though the great nordic regions are practically teeming with super-bad-ass rock 'n' roll bands right now, this disc proves

that you can't get far enough away without finding some lame Fat Wreck Chordswannabe band. Extra tip for the l a n g u a g e impared punks: if



you're going to go through all the trouble of singing and writing down all of your lyrics in english, try to actually have them make a lick of sense. (JC)

(NO ADDRESS)

ONE WAY SYSTEM "The Singles Collection"LP

Get Back! strikes again with another great re-issue! This is a collection, (obviously) of early ONE WAY SYSTEM singles, demo versions,



and compilation appearances. Stand outs and classics are "Jerusalem", "Me and YOu", "Just Another Hero", "Jackie Was A Junkie", and "Children Of The NIght"... Basically, this whole fucking record is loaded to the hilt with absolute rockers! For a good introductory crash course on a pretty goddamn good, tough-rockin' band, buy this fuckin' record! (IAW)

(GET BACK! Plazza Maltoni 16/50065 Pontassieve/Firenze Italia)

ONE WAY SYSTEM "Waiting For Zero" CD

The first new full-length in ten years from these Britpunk stalwarts, recently reformed. While not the agressive brickwall driving punk of yesteryear, this



is a fairly interesting fast-paced rock album. Kinda reminiscent of the way KRAUT went rock with "Whetting The Scythe." Anyone expecting a repeat of "Stab The Judge" or "Jerusalem", however, should steer well clear. (RK)

(GMM /PO Box 15234/ATLANTA, GA 30333)

OS MUTANTES "Everything Is Possible!"

"d read about OS MUTANTES ("The Mutants"), a bizarre Brazilian late '6os/early '7os band in Ugly Things and when I checked out this



recent "best of" CD, I was not disappointed. Imagine, if you will, a band that combined Brazillian bossa nova with offbeat garage and psychedelia and you get OS MUTANTES! There are actually reissues of each of their five actual albums on another label out there, but this serves as a very good intro to the band. Fuzz guitars, cool male and female vox, weird instrumentation and sounds all add up to one strange but thoroughly satisfying listening experience. The accompanying booklet is filled with info, and great pics of this ultra-underground band of weirdos. If, like me, you are so blown away by this, you'll then go out and get the album reissues as well! (AW)

(LUAKA BOP/WARNER BROS.)

OUT COLD "Live In Amsterdam" CD

Formidable hardcore outfit. I am not familiar with them and don't know their history, but this 28 song cd shows a powerful band with a pretty



decent catalog of songs. Recorded live on a European tour, some of the quality is iffy. The usual tinny guitars and drowned out vocal problems that occur on a release like this are present, but not overbearing, while the energy level comes across as a definite high. This is worth picking up; I'm going to try and find some more material from this band. (JC)

(KANGAROO/MIDDENWEG 13/1098 AA AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS)

OUT OF DARKNESS "A Tribute to New Math" 7" ep

WHY?!" I a s k ,
"WHY?!" Maybe
I'm lame or something and maybe
I'm missing the
boat or something - but who
the hell is "NEW



MATH"? Why do they exist? And why would anyone wanna cover these lame songs? Side one is so lame it has to be a joke that i'm just not getting. These bands are so lame I can't even describe it! The flipside is just as lame - even if the so-called "music" is more straightforward. All in all, this blows.(TL)

(REANIMATOR/PO BOX 1582/ANN ARBOR, MI 48106)

OUTRAGEOUS CHERRY "Out There In The Dark" CD

These guys are pretty cool. They feature MATHEW SMITH - who's produced some great new Detroit bands, such as the



righteous THE GO. This may be a little too soft for most punkers, being that it is more psych-pop style stuff, but I really like it. It reminds me of some of the great psychedelia that came out during the whole "Paisley Underground" scene of the '8os. There's echoes of THE VEL-VET UNDERGROUND, early PINK FLOYD, psych-period BEATLES, "S.F. Sorrow" era PRETTY THINGS and "Pet Sounds" era BEACH BOYS. I like to listen to this when I've been smoking the ol' wacky weed. Songs range from softer psych to feedback-drenched GORIES/BLACKTOPS/DIRTBOMBS member MICK COLLINS guests on backing vocals, and there's even some cello, violin and trumpet thrown into the mix along with the core use of guitars,

drums and keyboards. I'm tripping out, man! (AW)

(Del-Fi Records/P.O. Box 69188/Los Angeles, CA 90069)

OXBLOOD "6 Hard Years" CD

Musically, this collection of recorded output that has appeared on various compilations, splits and vinyl of the 7 and 12" persuasion puts



OXBLOOD at the forefront of uninspired second-rate 4-SKINS copyists. And, as the myriad of multi-racial photographs enclosed testify, these guys sure are non-racist. As the inspirational lyrics contained herin further testify, being non-racist doesn't exclude one from being a total fucking idiot. When they attempt (very rarely) to stray from the usual we're really violent, we're the boys, don't cross us, we're here to stay, never give in, stick together (or we'll have to smash your head in) drivel, they wax poetically on the joys of patriotism, and the glory days when flag-burners got the kicking they undoubtedly deserved. Skinheads - more hair than brains. (RK)

(Punkcore Records/PO Box 916/MIDDLE ISLAND, NY 11953)

PERCY AND THE GAOLBIRDS 7" EP

Oh, yeah, this is Gexcellent. German beatmusik from 1966. I'd already heard the cool, but somewhat silly, Germun-sung "Lieber Franz" on



the "Beat On The Krauts" compilation, but these other tunes are plenty boppin' as well. The other three songs are sung in English, and "Who Can Help Me" is a bouncy tune in the style of early KINKS, while "How To Catch A Girl" and "I Will Do" of early Beatles-at-the

REVIEWS

Star Club quality to 'em. Apparently this previously unreleased stuff was put out with the help of one of the members' nephews. Ist nicht ein crazy, ja? (AW)

(BACCHUS ARCHIVES/P.O. BOX 1975/BURBANK, CA 91507)

PHÓBIA "Destroying The Masses" CD

We've got the heavy, heavy grindcore action going on here. Blistering, unflinching hardcore, gruff evilsounding vocals and an intense



barrage of noisy, chunky guitars and speedy drumming. Not the type of stuff I devote too much time to, but there is something definitely infectious in what PHOBIA do, what with so much energy to feed off of. (JC)

(PESSIMISER/PO BOX 1070/HERMOSA BEACH, CA 90254)

PINBACK "Tripoli" CD

Sleepy indierock, some electronics and a bit of a French pop sound. Think SEBADOH meets STEREOLAB. Needless to say, this one won't be



seeing my CD player again, but they seem all right for that type of band. (JC)

(ACE FU/PO BOX 3386/HOBOKEN, NJ 07030)

PINHEAD CIRCUS "Fall In Love All Over Again" CD

The out of print 'Nothing Groundbreaking"
Lp, the "Gone Again" 7" and 9 other rare
and unreleased tracks. The early years - and

good years they were too, showcasing their infectious amped up power-pop-punk. A speedier JAW-BREAKER in a good mood, with a dash of every-



one's favorite SCREECHING WEASEL for good measure. (RK)

(SODA JERK /PO BOX 4056/BOULDER, CO 80306)

POONTWANG"Oh Yeah" CD

Tons of fun in this little record. Good rockin garage chick band. Snotty lyrics. Lo-fi snare and cowbell drumming combined with classic sounding guitars



and keyboards. They are a hoot. Especially on tracks like: "Throw Like A Girl", "Are You Well Hung" and "Planet Suckass". (JC)

(SWEATY BETTY/371 GUERRERO STREET/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94103)

PRESSURE POINT "Life's Blood" CD

This is one band
I was way too
quick to judge (I
believe I've
reviewed their
shit before and
wasn't all that hot
about it...).
Needless to say,



this lil CDEP fucking rocks...real nice, straightfoward rock-n-roll guitar attack here on "Claim The Night". Same deal on "Retribution" - great lead melodies, and a strong ability to arrange good, interesting, and catchy songs. These guys are a great

street rock band if i ever heard one - the only thing is that I think they may be taking themselves a bit too seriously... but fuck it - this one's great. (JAW)

(TKO/4104 24TH ST. #103/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94114)

PRETTY THINGS

"Rosalyn", "Big City", "Buzz The Jerk", "Midnight To Six Man", "A House In The Country" 7" reissues

On the heels of jukebox 45 RPM campaigns built around anything and everything essential by punk forefathers the SONICS and LINK WRAY,



Norton Records is back with their greatest reissue caper yet: Wild, glossy-sleeved, seven-inched, 45 RPM'd recreations of (fictional) UK extended-play brillance by everyone's favorite longhaired reprobates, the PRETTY THINGS. Buy all of these immediately (even if, like myself, you wish Norton had assembled four completely different tracks/takes for the "Emotions"-era EP listed last above). (JJ)

(Norton/Box 646, Cooper Station/New York, NY 10276)

PURITANS

"Sing The Hymns Of Shoutin' Abner Pim"CD

Good rock from Calgary. At times heavy punk wth noodling guitar riffs that are well pulled off. In their bio they are classified as jazz, blues, punk, psy-



chobilly etc., don't let that scare you off. I like the singer's vocals: a combination of DAVE VANIAN and the guy from LOS LOBOS.(BB)

(S.A.P. RECORDS/1724 22ND AVE. N.W./CALGARY, AB, CAN T2M 1R5)

? AND THE MYSTERIANS "More Action" 2xCDs

Wow, this is really, really great! Not that I wasn't expecting it to be good, because I saw 'em live a year ago and they were great. That



Norton live CD is really good, also. On this one, they redo some old songs, plus recorded a bunch of new originals and covers. Everyone knows "96 Tears"; maybe they might wanna stop rerecording that one, and I could do without THREE versions (one in English, one in Spanish, and one an instro version!), but that aside, it's cool. Of the "new" songs, they cover the Canadian garage rock classic "Feel It" by IT'S ALL MEAT, "Don't Give It Up Now" by THE LYRES, and in a completely from-left-field move, SUICIDE's "Cheree," which fucking rocks! Perhaps it was a tribute to SUICIDE covering "96 Tears" back in the '70s. Their cover of "Satisfaction" is also fuzztone mania fun! The recent Norton single, "Sally Go 'Round The Rose" is included, and you can also watch a video of it by popping this in your CDRom drive! Also cool are the two 1966 acetate demos snuck on the end that despite being crackley, are way cool. Get this! (AW)

(CAVESTOMP!/P.O. BOX 20574/NEW YORK, NY 10009)

RADIO 4 "Beat Around The Bush" 7"

Pretty decent postpunk out of New Jersey featuring a former GARDEN VARIETY member. Seems all the emo boys eventually go post-punk.(BB)



(GERN BLANDSTEN RECORDS/PO BOX 356/RIVER EDGE, NJ 07661)

RAMONES

"Blitzkrieg Pop" CD-ROM

This thing is both an audio CD and a CDROM thingy, packaged as separate discs. From a '79 show in Germany, the RAMONES blast through a short set of faves from



their first four studio albums to an obviously small, but enthusiastic audience on the "Musikladen" TV show. The audio is great, and the visuals really cool, although one annoying thing is it stops after each song and cuts out for a few seconds before the next one starts. They go thru stuff like "Rockaway Beach", "Teenage Lobotomy", "I Don't Care", and the not oft-played "Don't Come Close." Great stuff, decent packaging, fairly bad liner notes. And the song is "Blitzkrieg BOP," not "pop!" (AW)

(MASTERTONE/NO ADDRESS)

MARKY RAMONE AND THE INTRUDERS

"The Answer To Your Problems" CD

was pretty impressed by this, the second CD from MARKY since the RAMONES split up. Featuring a different line-up than his first solo



CD, this is more energized. The production, provided by Lars from RANCID, is gritty. BEN TROKAN, who sings most of the songs, sounds uncannily like Milo Aukerman, and throughout this there's kind of a RAMONES-meets- DESCENDENTS vibe. All of it is short, fast stuff, although "Don't Blame Me, " which features a duet with JOAN JETT, goes for a soul-pop kinda sound. Overall, I liked this a lot. (AW)

(ZOE/ROUNDER/ONE CAMP ST./CAMBRIDGE, MASS., 02140)

RAZORWIRE

"Man The Guns" 7"

Holy shit! where did these guys come from? 4 songs - kinda slow and sludgy at times but then it really picks up into some quality



hardcore! Big gang choruses and lots of flashy leads on the guitars. Lyrical topics generally revolve around getting sold out by friends and going insane. RAZORWIRE are tough as nails. (IR)

(RODENT POPSICLE/PO 335/NEWTON CENTER, MA/02459)

REAL KIDS

"Down To You/Make It Go Away"
7"

All original members are back and most of the original sparkle is still there. I heard rave reviews about the reunion shows, but sadly I



missed them both times they played out here. This is the first of the new material that I have heard and I am definitely not disappointed. Both tracks are excellent and show a band still worthy of all the hype. I can't wait until the new full length next year. (JC)

(TKO/4104 24TH STREET #103/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94114)

RESONARS

"So Below/Sleep Don't Travel" 7"

THE RESONARS
have a sorta
1967 L.A. sound.
"MAX FROST AND
THE TROOPERS"
from the movie
"Wild In The
Streets" come to
mind. Both songs



are way-groovy and flower powerish. They

REVIEWS

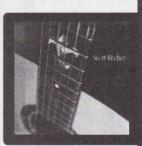
have good harmonies and way-heavy fuzz sound which sounds killer (for a modern band). KIM FOWLEY would be proud. (TL)

(NO ADDRESS)

SCOTT RITCHER

"Impossible Outcomes" CD

Apparently this Adude runs Initial records, responsible for such abominations as BOY SETS FIRE, and plays in MET-ROSCHIFTER.



That's still no excuse to review this. This is utter crap, that has nothing whatsoever to do with the music apparently covered in this zine. One man and his guitar. Both appallingly bad. I guess as a sociological experiment, it sparks a modicum of interest in proving how utterly dire one can be with such instrumentation. (RK)

(I CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S A RECORD COMPANY, DISTRIB-UTED BY INITIAL.)

ROAD VULTURES

"Ride, Ride, Ride, Ride" CD

just finished giving a KEVIN K BAND release a bad review, saying I heard there was better stuff out there. Well here it is. Basically the



K.K.BAND with the addition of (brother?) Alan K. A world of differrence in songwriting quality and production. This is good ol' rock and roll with a heaping helping of glam thrown in. Kinda like the TRASH BRATS, but not as over the top. (JC)

(CIRCUMSTANTIAL/12 7TH AVENUE/BROOKLYN, NY 11217)

ROADRUNNERS

"Love Me As I Am/Payback Time"
7"

angly 60's-style garage rock from Sweden. The b side is my favorite of the two, as it's a bit fuzzier with more of a SEEDS influence. Nice thick



European vinyl that's always a treat. (JC)

(BELUGO MUSIC/P O BOX 8158/10420 STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN)

RUDE KIDS"Worst Of....A Pardonless Collection" CD

America had BOYS, Britain had the SEX PISTOLS, Australia had the SAINTS...Sweden boasted the RUDE KIDS. More raw than any of



their aforementioned contemporaries, they kicked out the jams in exquisite style from 1977-83. They even sung in English. 22 tracks culled from their recorded output (a couple of 7"s, an LP and mini LP) and some unreleased stuff. You already know you want this. (RK)

(Distortion Records/Box 129/401 22 Gothenburg/Sweden)

SABROSITAS "Beach Blanket Banditos" CD

Lo-fi surf and garage instrumentals in the northwest style, a la the WAILERS, and the KINGS-MEN. "Rip Curl" reminds me a bit of "Tall Cool

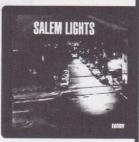


One"...sort of. "Atomic Salsa" has a good meaty fuzz sound, but all in all I've heard all of this before. Nothing here knocks my socks off. (TL)

(STAR TIME/PO BOX 43091/Tuscon, AZ 85733)

SALEM LIGHTS "Ivory" CDEP

If you're gonna make the bold statement of calling yourselves the "Bay's Only Rock N' Roll Band", you'd better goddamn well have the tunes to



back it up. These guys don't. I'm not saying they're bad or anything, it's just sort of like listening to a REAL KIDS 45 on 33. (JER)

(FUNHOUSE/PO BOX 20708/OAKLAND, CA 94611)

SAVES THE DAY "Through Being Cool"

Through being LIFETIME, the magnificent SAVES THE DAY have crafted a niche all their own. This might very well be the pop-punk record



of 1999. Heart-rending lyrics, a vendetta against someone named Nick (which I also share), and references to QUEEN thrown against hard-hitting guitars, bass and drums that reflect yet transcend this young group's hardcore roots. Singer/lyricist Chris Conley even manages to make Kansas sound appealing; no mean feat in my eyes. Their live set was one of the two best I saw in 1999. I'll stop now, 'cause I can't say enough about these kids. (DGJ)

(EQUAL VISION/WWW.EQUALVISION.COM)

SCOTT MOODY IMPLOSION "Implosion" 7" EP

rive-song EP with songs that all kinda moosh together somehow . Surf & Drag

fans take note.
Pretty good
rockin' instrumentals here, my
fave being
"DRAGULA"(not
the TRASHWOMEN version).
Pretty meaty



fuzzed out reverb; Gearhead magazine would be proud. (TL)

(STAR TIME/PO BOX 43091/TUSCON, AZ 85733)

SEA SCOUTS "Pattern Recognition"LP

Watered down
JUNE OF 44
type stuff. If this
was 1995, it
might be interesting. These kids
are from
Austrailia, so it's
a bit forgivable



and you just can't resist those earnest faces on the enclosed poster. I can't, however, forgive the lame drawings of aliens on the cover. Alien shit is so played out...makes me think of ravers who do tons of drugs and talk about spirituality.(BB)

(CHAPTER MUSIC/PO BOX 4292/MELBOURNE UNI/PARKVILLE V/C, AUSTRALIA 3052)

SENOR NO "No me Hables" CD

Riff-heavy Spanish punk rock with a big sound and even bigger hooks. SENOR NO are among the new wave of Iberian ass-kicking punk



outfits who know how to play their instruments, write a pretty good tune, have fun, and display infectious enthusiasm. On this CD, the scream-punctuated instrumental "1999", "Adios", "Loca", and the title track are especially fetching, but the other songs are pretty good too. (JB)

(NO TOMORROW/APDO. 1134/12080 CASTELLON/SPAIN)

7 SECONDS "Good To Go" CD

digiven up on these guys a long time ago, but was pleasantly surprised at how good this was. Pretty potent hardcore, but with supercatchy



songs. It made me go and check out some of their more recent offerings, too, because after that horrible "Soulforce Revolution" album they did back in '89 I gave up on 'em as they'd become so wimpy. Well this, their first album since '95, is a return to their glory days. Just fast-paced, super energy-filled posi-core with sincere, not-too-corny lyrics. The whole album cocks in at around 30 minutes with rad songs like, well...all of it. There's not a bad song on here! (AW)

(SIDE ONE DUMMY/6201 SUNSET BLVD, SUITE 211/HOLLYWOOD, CA 90028)

SEWERGROOVES "Songs From The Sewer" CD

Ya like THE H E L L A -COPTERS? Then you'll probably enjoy THE SEW-E R G R O O V E S, whose Estrus 6song EP I also dug, but this is



even better. Midtempo and a sound reminiscent of SONICS' RENDEZVOUS BAND and RADIO BIRDMAN, which means great riffs, catchy songs and guitar that grabs you by the throat and doesn't let go. From the first guitar chord, I knew I was gonna like this. (AW)

(ESTRUS/P.O. BOX 2125, BELLINGHAM/WA 98227)

SEX SYMBOLS "Thriller Punk Rock" 7" EP

The SEX SYMBOLS play high-quality old school punk with flare and a trashy aesthetic. Their songs feature melodies, cool choruses, and a shimmering guitar sound, and they've got 'tude to spare. "Sex

Symbols" is the best track, but "Reaction" and "Mr. Tokyo" aren't far behind. Great cover art, too. (JB)



(HATED YOUTH/FLORIANO MONFREDINI/VIA BRIONE 9/38083 CONDINO [TN]/ITALY)

SHAGS 7" EP

Ugh, what a disappointment this '6os relic turned out to be. Not to be confused with THE SHAGS from New England of "Don't Press Your Luck" fame,



these guys hailed from Illinois and the liner notes to this say how this is not the "earthshaking, sabre-rattling, blood-curdling garagepsych of many of their contemporaries," and they weren't kidding. Geez, give me GONN over this anyday! I mean, I like some pretty poppy '60s stuff, AND I really love stuff like THE HOL-LIES, ZOMBIES, LEFT BANKE, BEAU BRUM-MELS, and BYRDS, but this is just plain horrible! They compare it to early NEW COLONY SIX, but even those guys sound like THE SONICS compared to this! I couldn't even make it through an entire song, except for the last one (which was barely passable at best.) Calling them a "garage band" is almost an insult, these guys are so polite and sugary sweet they make THE BEACH BOYS sound dangerous! Avoid like the plague! (AW)

(CME RECORDS/2615 NORTH UNIVERSITY/PEORIA, IL 61604)

SHUTDOWN 66 "Shutdown 66/BBC Heaven" 7"

Raw, dirty neo-6os garage scuzz with woeis-me lyrical flourishes and a good bit of distemper. The Aside is a nasty rockin' number



REVIEWS

which sounds better with each successive listen, and "BBC Heaven" is a bouncier, poppier thang with occasional screams and a terrific radio-friendly chorus. Way fuckin' cool. (JB)

(CORDUROY/AUSTRALIA)

SICK BOYS "Put Your Weight On It" CD

With their name and image (tattoos, pompadours), I expected at least a little bit of a SOCIAL DISTORTION influence. What I got was



next-generation QUEERS, along the same lines as THE CRETINS & THE HEARTDROPS. It's not bad, but I think they're applying for a position that has way too many applicants as it is. (JER)

(STUMBLE/57 LEASIDE DR./ST. CATHARINES, ON L2M 4G1/CANADA)

SKIT SYSTEM/WOLFPACK Split 7"

That's it, I'm moving to Sweden. What a great record! This split boasts two totally awesome Swedish hardcore bands. SKIT SYSTEM has a great



recording that displays their rapid hardcore well. Punishing from start to finish. WOLF-PACK have a very similar sound. If you're not familiar with Swedish hardcore, use DETESTATION as a US example. (AD)

(DISTORTION/NO ADDRESS)

SMALL BROWN BIKE "Collection" CD

All those into HOT WATER MUSIC, take one giant step forward. Now all you people in the back are either fucking idiots, or are just seriously



missing the boat. SMALL BROWN BIKE are not too far off from the HWM sound, and the few differences are what make them rule just as much. Mainly mid-tempo songs, aggressive as all hell, intelligent songwriting with chord progressions and breaks not too far removed from JAWBREAKER, dual gruff vocalists, and even a beard or two is what's going to have SMALL BROWN BIKE eventually emerging as one of the best bands going. This, as you probably gathered by the title "Collection", is comprised of two early 7"ers, a comp track, and the original demo. Check this out, and thank me later. (BAM)

(No Idea/PO Box 14636/GAINESVILLE, FL 32604)

SMASH YOUR FACE 7"

f you've been curious about checking out the new wave of Japanese hard-core, this gem is a great place to start. SMASH YOUR FACE are in



many ways a perfect band. Their songs would fall into the fast hardcore category, yet have a rock n roll edge to them that you don't find often in that genre. They're fast without losing any melody. The live show is great, too. (AD)

(PRANK RECORDS/P.O. BOX 410892/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94141-0892)

SMOGTOWN "Losin' It" 7"

This record s m o k e s! Great, loud, blaring guitars, raw, muddy-as-fuck production, and catchy tunes; this seven inch packs a punch! This



kinda reminds me of the CANDYSNATCHERS, but without Larry May's higher pitched vocals. This also brings to mind the reckless abandon of BLACK FLAG and the melodic sensibilities of the US BOMBS. If this seems at all appealing, (if it doesn't, you're a dumbass), then you should probably spend your lunch money on this one. (JAW)

(HOSTAGE RECORDS/7826 SERGLEN DR./HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA 92698)

SMUGGLERS "Rosie" CD

've always liked this band's live show, but I've never been impressed with their recorded output. While I'm not about to rush out and buy all their albums, I



must say that there is some high quality rock n' roll going on here. More head boppin' upbeat tunes here than you can shake a stick at. I especially like the title track, and the two Dr. Frank penned tunes. Pretty cool. (JER)

(LOOKOUT/PO BOX 11374/BERKELEY, CA 94712)

SNAKE CHARMERS "Rock N' Roll Deathwish" CD

These guys have that "LA rock band" look going on in spades, and despite popular wisdom, sometimes you can



judge a book by its cover. That is to say, I knew exactly what these guys sounded like before the laser ever hit the CD. That's not necessarily a bad thing, I mean there are a couple rockers on here like "Bleeding" & "Roll On", but it all feels pretty familiar. (IER)

(SONIC TONE/PO BOX 284/NEWPORT BEACH, CA 92651)

SOMEDAY I "Look Up And Live" CD

The easy comparison, given their label, would be DESCENDENTS/ALL. And while this is a fair starting place, it's the DESCENDENTS minus



their pop gems, and more the 'weird' tracks on "All." A more math-rock approach to the whole pop thang. And more college than punk. They never quite manage to burst out with that sing-a-long pop classic you feel is lurking among all the dischords and riff changes. (RK)

(OWNED AND OPERATED/PO BOX 36/FORT COLLINS, CO 80522)

SPAZZ "Crush Kill Destroy" CD

Absolutely
core/grindcore/
spazzcore. SPAZZ
sure do pack a lot
into a short cd. 25
tracks in 19 minutes. Pure fun.
Lots of hilarious



samples sprinkled through the metallic mayhem. Samples are pretty played out in punk records, but SPAZZ pull them off without sounding dumb or cheesy. (JC)

(SLAP A HAM/PO BOX 420843/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94142)

SPIDERS FROM MARS (S/T) LP

You'll have to excuse me, but I have no fucking idea who these guys are. Basically, they aspire to be pretty glammy, clearly in the vein of



ZIGGY, however, they often flounder between BOSTON-esque wrongness, easylistening elevator-rock, and (few and far between), some pretty alright rock-n-roll, namely "Red Eyes". Overall, this is very good for easily-ignorable, relatively nonoffensive background music. (JAW)

(GET BACK/PIAZZA MALTONI 16/50065 PONTASSIEVE (FIERENZE) ITALY)

SPITFIRES "Slick Black Cat" 7"ep

really like this first song, "Slick Black Cat"....it's a good, mid-tempo rocker. "She's Hot" is also a really cool rock-n-roller. Overall, I would



bet these guys are pretty influenced by ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN, THE HELLA-COPTERS and THE DEVIL DOGS. If you are into any of these bands, you would probably like this record.... (JAW)

(JUNK RECORDS/POB 1474/CYPRESS, CA 90630)

SPITFIRES "Social Club" CD

Killer Canadian punk 'n' roll with E.F.-style vocals and a trashy, belligerent sound. The SPITFIRES sound like sloppy drunk punks with a



HUMPERS-meet-the-DEVIL DOGS sound,

and I mean that as a compliment. The title song is absolutely amazing, and there are plenty of other rockin' tracks to keep you shakin' (such as "Gotta Go" and "Drop Kick Me Jesus"), which is exactly what we've come to expect from Sonic Swirl. (JB)

(SONIC SWIRL/PO BOX 770303/LAKEWOOD, OH 44107)

SPLASH 4 "Shame, Shame" CD EP

Awhole mess of dirty old rock 'n' roll going on here. Noisy GERMS-meets-DEAD BOYS tunes. Heavilly effected, surfy guitar leads remi-



niscant of East Bay Ray's playing in the DEAD KENNEDYS. Good start, lets hear some more. (JC)

(DIONYSUS RECORDS/P.O. BOX 1975/BURBANK, CA 91507)

SQUIDBOY "Drinking Songs" CD

This is definitley not my thing; emo-core, poppy, heavymetal rock stuff. If you're really into bands that are into HÜSKER DÜ and maybe



FUGAZI and SABBATH, then this is your pick of the week. There are tons of weird dissonant chords, "emotional" lyrics, and a general lack of song-structure on this lil' gem. I think this sucks, but maybe someone into this type of boring morphed-shit would love it. (JAW)

(ALLIED RECORDINGS/POB 460683/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94146-0683)

REVIEWS

SRI

"Gravity Reminds Me" CD

MTV here we go! Boring, generic, alternative college rock. No balls, no originality, and most of all - no Rock and Roll. Female voclaist that



sounds like every other chick singer on MTV - think GARBAGE, VERUCA SALT...aaarrrggh-hhh! Why does HIT LIST get this crap to review? A big yukum yukum!! (TL)

(BLUE BOY/739 MANOR ST/PA 17603)

STATISTICS, THE "Hate" 7"

Standard crusty
punk that
musically sounds a
bit like AUS ROTTEN. "Fuck the
government" type
lyrics. Not mind
blowing, but not
bad, either. (AD)



(RODENT POPSICLE RECORDS/NO ADDRESS)

STILLETTO BOYS "Rockets And Bombs" CD

This band is pretty rad. They sound like a cross between the DICK-IES and the REAL KIDS. Heavy doses of instrumental swagger. The singer gets a little



overboard at times with his particular rock 'n' roll squawk, but never really hurts the material doing it. Another newer band with a great deal of potential. (JC)

(HIGH SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL/ST. PETERSBURGER STR 4/18107 ROSTACK GERMANY)

STREETWALKIN' CHEETAHS/BELLRAYS " Punk, Rock, & Soul" CD

This CD starts off with THE STREETWALKIN' CHEETAHS. First off, I'm surprised that DENIZ TEK, WAYNE KRAMER, JOHNNY THUNDERS, CHUCK



BERRY, TWINK, AND STIV BATORS didn't all have a guest appearance on this one. Actually, this record isn't as sonically offensive as most of their wank-ed out wannabe 70's rock, but that is not saying much. On the flip are THE BELLRAYS. These guys and gal are straight-up MC5 worshippers with TINA TURNER on vox. They are also a prime example of a band with a synergy that cannot be ignored - split up the singer and the band, and neither would be that interesting - but together, they're great!! Supa-fuzzed out guitars, and a gritty as fuck vocalist. You can't really go wrong. (JAW)

(COLDFRONT /PO BOX 8345/BERKELEY, CA 94707)

JOE STRUMMER AND THE MESCALEROS

"Rock, Art and the X-Ray Style" CD

Maybe I'm not the best person to judge this CD, as pretty much anything involving the former CLASH frontman gets me excited.



While I believe "The Clash" and "London Calling" to be Joe's finest moments, I'd still much rather listen to the most dire parts of "Sandanista!" than Britney Spears (sorry Brett). In fact, "...X-Ray Style" is closer to "Sandanista!" in scope and sound than Strummer's previous solo outing, covering a broad range of musical styles, including rockabilly, dance, folk, and a tad of country all kinda mashed together into an English stew and channelled through Strummer's familiar rasp. A

great lazy-Sunday record. (DGJ)

(HELLCAT/2798 SUNSET BLVD/LOS ANGELES, CA 90026)

SUICIDE DOORS/THREE YEARS DOWN

"Lemonade" 7"

SU I C I D E DOORS are kinda twangy-hooky, dare I say, sleeeeazy, primitive rock-n-roll-kinda good, but pretty generic. THREE YEARS



DOWN is totally boring three chord rock. Both bands are no great shakes, but SUI-CIDE DOORS win hands down on this rekkid. (JAW)

(CHEETAH'S RECORDS/POB 4442/BERKELEY, CA 94704-0442)

SUPERSUCKERS

"The Evil Powers Of Rock-N-Roll"
CD

THE SUPER-SUCKERS are back with a harder rocked-out edge than ever before. This is no "Smoke Of Hell"; this one is complete with fade-



outs, breakdowns, and ultra wah-ed-out solos, dude. Some songs lean more towards their hyper-fast punk-rock songs and some are more hard rockin'. Overall, this is a good, solid record for about the first half - then I start losing interest. (JAW)

(ACES & EIGHTS/NO ADDRESS)

SYRUP "Solid Gold ASSTRO SOUL" CD

magine FU MANCHU if they had more of a "soul" or disco influence and you have SYRUP. Their low, dare I say "Phat" back end is so heavy that is is draaagggging across the floor right behind 'em. This is ultra bassy rock complete with "wakachikawachachi-

ka" guitar. Many of these songs are very 70's rock influenced and have a kinda disco-y, boogie beat. Anyhow, if you are into 70's groove rock stuff,



this would probably give you a boner. (JAW)

(Scooch Pooch Records/5850 3rd St # 209/LA,CA 90036)

TEENAGE KICKS "Call Me On The Phone" 7"

Good name, band. This is kinda unfortunate, 'cause I was expecting a bit more. Overall, these guys are pretty pre-



dictable, formula one-four-five, rock-a-billy schlock; you've heard it all before, and better. "Right Behind You Baby", has a very sing-a-long, catchy chorus, but kinda in the sense that it is annoyingly impossible to get outta your head. (JAW)

(GAGA 45 GANG/POB 47/13211 HML FINLAND)

TIGER ARMY "Tiger Army" CD

Bolistering set of MISFITSy rockabillly with a fine sense of country and western. Reminds meabit of the METE-ORS meets the



HELLLBILLYS. Dark, spooky lyrics of doomed romance and creatures of the night. Punctuated by Nick 13's powerful and passionatte vocals that sound like a mix of Glan Danzig and Davey Havok of AFI. Fitting, considering AFI's drummer plays in the band as well as all the members guest appearances on various tracks. A highly impressive debut from a band in the works for quite some time. Probably

my favorite Hellcat release so far. (JC)

(HELLCAT/2798 SUNSET BLVD/LOS ANGELES, CA 90028)

TODAY IS THE DAY "In the Eyes of God" CD

TODAY IS THE DAY play black metal that is a bit experimental sounding. The lyrics are at various times arrogant, esoteric, silly, and offen-



sive. Lyrics like, "We'll rule this world with my big cock, Oh God I love you, I live to rock," and "This is reality, niggers, Jews, faggots, whores," really make me question the band's integrity. (AD)

(Relapse Records/P.O. Box 251/Millersville, PA 17551)

TODAY IS THE DAY "Temple Of The Morning Star" CD

One of the work, creepy and deeply disturbing CDs I've heard in awhile. An older album from this group that makes me think of



CHRISTIAN DEATH going grindcore. I don't want to say any more. I'm afraid if I give this a bad review they will put a curse on me. (JC)

(RELAPSE RECORDS/P.O. BOX 251/MILLERSVILLE, PA 17551)

TOWARDS AN END "Change And Pass Through" 7" EP

These kids aren't turning out half bad. Gruffer vocals and stronger songs than I had heard on previous outings. This band seems to have a



lot of potential, keep an eye out for them in the future. (IC)

(LOOKOUT/PO BOX 11374/BERKELEY, CA 94712)

TRAINING FOR UTOPIA

"Throwing A Wrench In The American Music Machine" CD

Fucking hell. The ways of the Lord are indeed beyond the understanding of us mere mortals. Emo Christians try and re-enact the REVOLTING



COCKS' worst outtakes, and fail miserably. You guys should give up on God and stick to heroin. At least it works for Al Jourgenson. (RK)

(SOLID STATE/PRESUMABLY ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS)

TRASH BRATS

"Must Be The Cocaine" 7"

Glammy LA style
rock n' roll
with one good
original song and
a decent ZERO
BOYS cover.
When I say
"glammy", I mean
full-on POISONstyle too. Those



boys are wearing more makeup than a Capp Street hooker. Good stuff, but kids, ditch the WebTV e-mail address, it's tacky. (JER)

(I-94/PO Box 44763/DETROIT, MI 48244)

TRAVOLTAS

"Modern World" CD

Do you remember when there was rock 'n' roll? And bub-

Uroll? And bubblegum? Do you remember the RAMONES and "Rock N Roll High School", BUDDY HOLLY and "Peggy Sue", the BEACH BOYS and "I Get



REVIEWS

Around"? These boys from Holland sure do, and have come up with the perfect distillation of everything that is quintessentially American and rock 'n' roll. Sweet, layered harmonies that leave you gasping for more; kicking riffs that would make DEE DEE jealous, and a PHIL SPECTOR production courtesy of MARKY RAMONE. Believe the hype. This is wonderful. (RK)

(COLDFRONT /PO BOX 8345/BERKELEY, CA 94707)

TRAVOLTAS / TUULI Split 7"

f you like the pop stuff, and you haven't checked out the TRAVOLTAS yet, you're blowin' it! These guys are the new kings of pop punk, and "I



Want To Believe" is their best song yet. Imagine NO USE FOR A NAME crossed with WESTON and the BEACH BOYS on vocals. It's just amazing. The TUULI side is pretty decent too, but it's more of a girly, indie-rock kind of number, and it just can't compete with the monster hooks the TRAVOLTAS dish up. All hail The Netherlands. (JER)

(COLDFRONT/AMPOP/PO BOX 8345/BERKELEY, CA 94707)

TRUST FUND BABIES "Can't Trust Me" 7"ep

Two really catchy, hooky rock-n-rollers, and one great CONSUMERS cover. "Lusty Lady" reeks of RADIO BIRDMAN which is fine with



me. The only unfortunate part is that the guitar should have been cranked way the fuck up! See this band if you have the chance! (JAW)

(RAPID PULSE RECORDS/POB 5075/MILFORD, CT 06460)

TSUNAMI BOMB
"Mayhem On The High Seas" 7"

This is Ska, Punk, Pirate, Spooky Music for kids 15 and y o u n g e r. Technically good, but very unoriginal. I do think they have poten-



tial and in the future might do something interesting.(BB)

(CHECKMATE/PO BOX 4099 BERKELEY, CA 94704)

THE TUFFIES "Got It Going On" CD

R. EDWIN of FLIPSIDE comes out with his band playing surfy garagepunk and roll, sort of in the vein of THE DRAGS and THE STATICS,



with goofy songs like "Let's Get Naked Tonight" and "Take a Whiff". It's all kinda just okay - nothing here really blows me away. Oh well.(TL)

(EDWIN/2754 PREWETT ST. A.A., C.A. 90031)

TUMULT "The Heroic Bloodshed" EP

Wow, fifteen songs on this gray marble slab of vinyl! TUMULT is from Germany, but sound like they've been heavily influ-



enced by many of the Slap-A-Ham powerviolence bands. The graphics are full on kung-fu style. (AD)

(DEFIANCE RECORDS/RITTERSTR.

50/50668/KOLN/GERMANY)

UNNATURAL AXE

"Brain Damage/Bombing And Burning" 7"

Another great old band from '77 on the comeback trail, trying to revitalize their career by cranking out new songs that are stylistically and



thematically similar to the original tracks that garnered them attention in the good old days. These two songs are fine rockin' numbers that are just too formulaic sounding. The energy is great; my main hope is that if they are back for a serious second go-round that they'll branch out and take the material further. (JC)

(D.U.I./PO Box 46073/MT. CLEMENS, MI 48046)

UNSEEN "Lower Class Crucifixion" CD

Agreat record
full of instantly anthemic working class/street
punk odes.
Politically driven
with strong lyrics
about revolution
and the victims of



the lower class. Super charged from start to finish. The soundtrack for anarchy and fighting in the streets. (JC)

(A.F./PO Box 71266/PITTSBURG, PA 15213)

VALENTINE KILLERS "Methanol" 7"ep

Although these guys and gal didn't necessarily do it for me live, this record smokes! Pretty savage, raw, garagey rock-nroll that is reminiscent of THE MOTARDS. Three outta four tunes are great... "Methanol", "Happy Hour", and "Devil's Night" are stripped down, no frills r-n-r.

"Green River" gets kinda boring. Overall, this is worthy of your mighty dollar. (JAW)



(MORTVILLE RECORDS/POB 4263/AUSTIN, TX 78765)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "A Tribute To The Ruts Vol.1" CD

The RUTS were simply one of the most wonderful - and woefully under-appreciated - punk bands ever. Period. Like the BAD BRAINS (and the CLASH, I

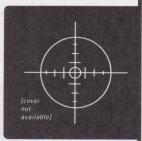


guess), they spread their incredible musicianship over reggae and punk - though instead of redifining hardcore, they pretty much invented 'street-punk' - while managing to be more musically sophisticated than contemporaries such as SHAM 69 and the UK SUBS. Fittingly, and fortunately, this is a superb tribute. Not a bad track in the whole collection, whch must be a first for any comp. Bigger names include EX-CATHEDRA, WAT TYLER, RED ALERT and EXTERNAL MENACE - an excellent salute to a phenomenal band....(RK)

(REJECTED RECORDS/PO BOX 6591/DUN LAOGHAIRE, CO. DUBLIN/IRELAND)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "Angry Punk For Urban Skunx" CD

Afairly high quality compilation of a fairly eclectic collection of punk, streetpunk/skin and early punker bands. All the unreleased tracks



are from lesser known bands, all of whom appear to have broken up already. Some of the bigger names - with tracks from recent, and not so recent, release - include ANTI-HEROS, BOILS, DRONES, NOTA, TEMPLARS,

VARUKERS, PETER AND THE TEST TUBE BABIES and WHATEVER (who turn in a great version of a classic later PARTISANS track). A good introduction to some pretty decent bands. (RK)

(45 REVOLUTIONS RECORDS/PO BOX 2568/DECATUR, GA 30031)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "Cinema Beer Belly" CD

Asoundtrack to the video of the same name. All the tracks herein are previously released, but as a scrumptious taster of the latest records



from the bands contained herein, its a class job. If you dig SICK OF IT ALL, AFI, WEAK-ERTHANS, SUPERCHUNK, BAD RELIGION, STRIKE, SCARED OF CHAKA, MAN OR ASTROMAN, SAMIAM, DIGGER, GAMEFACE, PINHEAD CIRCUS, QUEERS and more, or even just want a classy compilation of (largely) new stuff, you might want to invest in this one. (RK)

(HOPELESS /PO BOX 7495 NAN NUYS, CA 91409)

VARIOUS ARTISTS"Dangerously Unstable" CD

Not only is Suburban Voice one of the best underground punk zines around - it's well worth seeking out every new issue it's now got a free



CD inside. This disc rules. Starting off with ANTI-FLAG covering the BUZZCOCKS' "Orgasm Addict" live from a radio show, and rolling all the way through 9 SHOCKS TERROR laying down some old-school punk rock with a cool little twist, this CD brings you THE SUBHUMANS, THE UNSEEN, ECONOCHRIST, THE FREEZE, and even back to back NEGATIVE APPROACH covers by the almighty PIST, and the BOILS. 20 songs in all, most are unreleased or impossible to find. Order this now. \$5 pp in the US and

Canada, \$9 overseas. (BAM)

(SUBURBAN VOICE/PO BOX 2746/LYNN, MA 01903)

VARIOUS ARTISTS"East Coast Of Oi!"

Asurprisingly Solid release. New and not so new Oi! bands from East of the Mississippi doing their bit for drinking, fighting, having pride in your-



self and your country. I always thought it was a trifle strange, this being a skinhead means pride in your country stuff - doesn't that mean everyone should be proud of Britain then? The Brits started it after all. The bands struggling manfully with such esoteric concepts here include WRETCHED ONES, DUCKY BOYS, MAN'S RUIN, BRASSKNUCKLES, RUNNIN AMOK, BROKEN HEROES, SNIPER, the CUFFS and more. (RK)

(RADICAL RECORDS/77 BLEECKER STREET, #C2-21/New York, NY 10012)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Flattery - A Tribute To Radio Birdman, Pt. 1"

Well, I'm a huge BIRD-MAN fan - I even have their logo tattooed on meand I think it's pretty much impossible to improve on the



originals, but there's nothing wrong with trying. For the most part, the bands do a good job and I know that a lot of these bands are very influenced by the Aussie legends. That said, standouts include THE CANDY SNATCHERS' "Murder City Nights," "THE HELLACOPTERS' "Time To Fall." THE A-BOMBS "Cryin' Sun," DEAD CITY REBELS' "Breaks My Heart," ADAM WEST'S "Burned My Eye and POWDER MONKEYS' "Burned My Eye." Oh, and BON FUHRER, who I'd never even heard of, do a very strange version of "New Race" which incorporates a vacuum cleaner, a

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severely underappreciated instrument if ya ask me. (AW)

(NOMAD RECORDS/P.O. BOX WEST BETHESDA/MD 20817)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"For A Few Crash Helmets More"

ARetch Records label sampler. A lot of British bands, and their recordings from the 8os - INSTI-G A T O R S , ANHREFEN, PAR-ASITES, INSANE,



BLITZKREIG, VARUKERS..... with a smattering of more contemporary bands in the venerable spiky-haired, studded leather jacket tradition. (RK)

(RETCH RECORDS/49 ROSE CRESCENT/WOODVALE, SOUTHPORT, MERSEYSIDE, PR8 3RZ/ENGLAND)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "Greetings From The Welfare State" CD

The BYO boys (and girls) cross the Atlantic to import over a fresh assortment of limey punkers. Honestly there a few too many



straightforward pop-punk/skate rock bands for my tastes. The tracks that really grab me are the bands that are a little left of center like CITIZEN FISH, LEATHERFACE and the NEWTON GRUNTS. A good compilation overall, though feels like we are just scratching the surface of what's over there. (JC)

(B.Y.O./P.O. Box 67A64/L.A., CA 90067)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"History of Northwest Rock, Vol. 2" CD

Subtitled "the g a r a g e years," the second volume of this series focuses on the harder, fuzzier breed of bands coming out of the Northwest



during the years 1963-67. Righteous ART CHANTRY designed packaging, and lots of decent stuff from some better-known and some more obscure groups. Kicking off with THE KINGSMEN'S "Louie Louie," which despite my having heard it thousands of times, I still never get sick of it. DON AND THE GOODTIMES check in with "Turn On Song" and "Little Sally Tease" (later covered by THE STANDELLS) and THE SONICS appear with the insane "High Time" off of their oftoverlooked third LP, "Introducing THE SON-ICS," which has also been recently reissued by Beatrocket on LP again. You'll also get great songs like "Take A Look At me" by MR. LUCKY AND THE GAMBLERS, "Trick Bag" by THE COUNTS and super-rare and rockin' tunes by THE BEACHCOMBERS (one of the few NW surf bands), BARDS and IACK HORNER AND THE PLUMS. The CD ends off with a great and ultra-rare pounder by THE UNUSUALS called "I'm Walkin'Babe," whose singer has to be heard to be believed! (AW)

(JERDEN/SOUNDWORKS USA/P.O. BOX 4608, ROLLING BAY/WA 98061)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "Hot Nips Vols. 1 & 2" LPs

From Germany
come these
two very cool
comps of '6os
Japanese bands.
With no overlap
from other Jap
comps I have like
the three volumes



on Monster X/Sundazed or the great "G.S. I Love You" CD comp, you're sure to find more than enough killer Japanese '60s punk here. Liberal doses of fuzz 'n farfisa are applied by bands like the SPIDERS, GOLDEN CUPS, MOPS, WILD ONES, BUNNYS, JAGUARS and POWERHOUSE. Some songs are sung in their native language, while others are wigged-out interpretations of songs by the YARBDIRDS, GESTURES, RAY CHARLES, JAN and DEAN, and RICHARD BERRY. Very cool. (AW)

(DOLEMITE RECORDS/POB 1140, 96115 MEMMELSDORF/GERMANY)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"i chase the butterflies and the butterflies chase me" CD

MASSIVE FER-GUSON, COURT RECORDER, PRIS, BIONIC VI - all Canadian bands. MF, despite having the greatest band name this



week (I crack up laughing every time I see it), sound to me like something I would've really liked in 1992 - sort of a B-grade hybrid of JAWBOX and KYUSS. COURT RECORDER sound like sub-caliber early-PROMISE RING art-pop. PRIS do the sludgey, SABBATHY thing, which again, I might've liked in 1992. BIONIC VI apparently stole the demos for HELMET's "Strap It On" outtakes and released them under their own name. Nothing on this really makes me grit my teeth, but it's not exactly great, either. It sorta reminds me of a mediocre night at Gilman. (DGJ)

(CATCH AND RELEASE#69-2300 OAKMOORE DR. S.W./CALGARY, AB T3E 2S2, CANADA)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "I (heart) Metal" CD

Admit it. You head-banger too. I'm willing to bet that at least 95 percent of our readership owns at least one of the records whose songs are



featured here. REGGIE AND THE FULL EFFECT

(Side note: apparently, forward-thinking youngsters are already ditching their emo trappings and hitching their wagons to the ATOM AND HIS PACKAGE scene) start things off with a sequenced "Rain In Blood", which is probably a good thing, as I've never heard a real band get anywhere near touching the brilliance that is SLAYER's original. Track of the disc award goes to AVAIL's cover of MOTÖRHEAD's "Iron Fist". Somebody please tell me what the big deal is about the GET UP KIDS? They wreck a CRÜE song here. Luckily, I was never a big fan of the Motley ones - if it'd been a MAIDEN track, there'd be emo-boy blood in the streets and they'd be layin' up in the Rue Morgue. It's a fun record but, for the most part, forgettable. While Aaron Probe's "Death to False Metal" records might not feature the big names, the renditions of the classics far exceed what's presented here. (DGJ)

(TRIPLE CROWN/331 WEST 57TH ST. #472/New YORK, NY 10019)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "If You Can't Laugh At Yourself...We'll Do It For You" CD

Acompilation of Bay Area 'geek' bands - stalwarts of the (now lege n d a r y ?) Geekfests. Most of them tend towards a laid-back, lo-fi sound. Rocking



and raging are certainly not typical adjectives for this bunch. I'm sure they all wouldn't care one flying fuck. Attempts at humor and wackiness (with varying degrees of success - from the dismal to the wildly hilarious) are the norm. Bands include the mighty BOBBY JOE EBOLA AND THE CHILDREN MACNUGGITS, SUBINCISION, ERIK CORE, HOPE BOMBS, SLACKBONE, YELLOW, IMPACT and MY SUNNY DISPOSITION. I suspect largely for the converted, and devoted. (RK)

(SPAM RECORDS/PO BOX 21588/EL SOBRANTE, CA 94820)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Indulgence, Inc. A Tribute To Motley Crue" CD

Ye gods, this thing sucks mightily. With very few exceptions, this disc isn't much

more than a pricey beverage coaster. TUULI, STREETWALKIN' CHEETAHS & B-MOVIE RATS do a good job with a bad idea, but the rest of the "crue"



sounds more like Axl Rose than Vince Neil. Take the combs outta your pockets and hang up your Pro-Wings boys, you kids are a bunch of posers. (JER)

(DWELL/PO Box 39439/LA, CA 90039)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "Later That Same Year...." CD

Anew outing for
the e
"Absolutely
Zippo" (a zine)
compilation of
Bay Area bands
which originally
appeared in '92.
As such, it is an



excellent snapshot, and document, of the legendary East Bay scene. Tracks run the gamut from the sublime sounds of FUEL, BLATZ, FILTH and MONSULA, to the utter embarassment of perennial 'holier than thou', jumped-up, self-important nonentities FIFTEEN destroying a perfectly decent JAW-BREAKER song. GOOD GRIEF, CHICKEN HEAD, PAXSTON QUIGGLY, SPITBOY, GR'UPS, GRIMPLE and DOWNFALL also star. (RK)

(SPAM RECORDS/PO BOX 21588/EL SOBRANTE, CA 94802-1588)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "Live At The Boston Arms" 7" EP

Lo-fi document
of live stuff
from THEE HEADCOATS, THEE
HEADCOATEES,
GUARANTEED
UGLY and THE
SOLAR FLARES.
All the bands



sound like they're

really drunk and having a good time, but you

probably had to be there. (AW)

(Damaged Goods/P.O. Box 671, London/E17 6NR, U.K.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS"Move It!" CD

Subtitled
"Frantic fratstomp fracas,"
this volume of the
"Teenage
Shutdown" series
focuses on
crazed, wild,
revved-up '60s



garage pounders. I dare you to find a bad song on here. The sound is awesome; fun liner notes and pics. A lot of the tunes are demented covers such as "On The Road Again" by the DEADLYS which shreds the LOVIN' SPOONFUL original, "Slow Down" by DAVE & THE STONE HEARTS, "Let's Dance" by the EXCELS, and others. Kudos for including the amazing "Let's Go In '69" (which my band the INFERNAL THREE used to cover), by the CUSTOMS FIVE, a song alluding to the joys of a certain sex act. Highly recommended! (AW)

(CRYPT/NO ADDRESS)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "My So Called Punk Rock Life" CD

The girl on the cover of this is soooo cute! She looks like that girl from Rent. Anyhows, this is pretty much a no brainer. DAR-LINGTON, TEEN



IDOLS, the American debut of the world's best pop-punk band TRAVOLTAS, NOBODYS, BORIS THE SPRINKLER, PINK LINCOLNS, SMUGGLERS, JOHN COUGAR CONCENTRATION CAMP, CHIXDIGGIT!, LIMP, 22 JACKS, SQUIRTGUN...there's more, but I think you get the point. Essentially a road map to modern pop-punk, and although it would be deserving of full price, it's generously offered at a budget price that your punk rock ass can afford. Now GO! (BAM)

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(MELTED/21-41 34TH AVE SUITE 10A/ASTORIA, NY 11106)

VARIOUS ARTISTS"No Borders" CD

Acollection of Japanese and American hard-core, with a pretty loose definition of the latter. However, every track on here is previously unre-



leased, and if you appreciate the modern sounds of SNAPCASE, KID DYNAMITE, SHUTDOWN, INDECISION, 88 FINGERS LOUIE, SICK OF IT ALL et al, you'll appreciate this. The Japanese component are equally strong, if not better - STAB4REASON do a real good BAD BRAINS soundalike, and DECAY, AGRESSIVE DOGS, BENT ROOT, DOWNFALL, LAWDEAL, ABNORMALS, STOMPEDE and X FLOORS UP are not too slouchlike either. (RK)

(SUBURBAN HOME/PO BOX 40757/DENVER, CO 80204)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "No Good Turn Goes Unpunished" CD

Retch records
continue their
incredible exhumation of some of the
finest moments of
UK punk from the
early 80s - the heyday! This sampler
includes classics



from the likes of ABRASIVE WHEELS, ENGLISH DOGS, DEMOB, BLITZKREIG, ONE WAY SYSTEM, MORBID HUMOR, INSANE, BLITZ, VARUKERS, PARASITES (the Brit version) and more. Listening to this stuff again reminds me of how fucking good it actually was. You too could think that... (RK)

(RETCH RECORDS/49 ROSE CRESCENT/WOODVALE, SOUTHPORT, MERSEYSIDE, PR8 3RZ/ENGLAND)

VARIOUS ARTIST"Not Anymore" 7"

Atribute to the DEAD BOYS? My personal feelings are that at the very most, a band can get away with covering these songs live, as that is usually fun, but



when you go into record them, the best that you can hope for is to equal perfection—which is seemingly impossible. But I'll play along for now-the PLEASURE FUCKERS take on "What Love Is", the JET BUMPERS cover "Sonic Reducer", and the SPIDER BABIES tackle "Aint Nothing To Do"; three of my faves. To be honest, these could all be the second best versions of these songs that I've heard, which is complimentary. This is definitely something that I'll be keeping, but when my daily urge to hear these classics arises, you know it'll be "Young Loud & Snotty" that I'm pullin' out. (BAM)

(GUALTIERO PAGANI/VIA CUNEO 2-43100/PARMA ITALY)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "Pebbles, Vol. 12" CD

This volume of the "Pebbles" CD series concentrates on worldwide garage music from the '60s, and while some of it has appeared on



older vinyl comps, many make their first CD showing here and some have never been reissued before. Sound is pretty good overall, unlike some of the horrible transfers on the "Essential Pebbles" double CD. It also has some of my faves from those old vinyl volumes like THE PHANTOMS' version of "Roadrunner" and THE SHAMROCKS' "Midnight Train." Other hep numbers include the insane BUNNYS from Japan with "Moanin'," SHAKE SPEARS' "I Can't Tell," FIVE GENTLEMEN'S "Dis-nous Dylan" and THE PLEAZERS' twisted take on "Bald

Headed Woman." Great stuff!! (AW)

(AIP/BOMP!/P.O. BOX 7112/BURBANK, CA 91510)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "Playing For Chesty" 7"

Six songs from six bands (apparently a tribute to the freakishly huge bosoms of Chesty Morgan) that sound like they were recorded in



an alley (except for the SONIC DOLLS, who are actually pretty rockin'). That may be ok for you lo-fi cats, but I like to hear what the fuck I'm listening to. (JER)

(GUALTIERO PAGANI/VIA CUNEO 2/43100 PARMA/ITALY)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Probe Records Presents: Death To False Metal" CD

Sweet Jesus,
Probe Records
is at it again!
Nineteen punk
bands cover their
favorite metal
tunes. Easy winners here with The
BULEMICS doing



FASTER PUSSYCAT, LOUDMOUTHS doing TWISTED SISTER, POISON IVVY doing GIRLSCHOOL etc. My favorite this week is QUADILLIACHA'S blistering rendition of IRON MAIDEN'S "Murders In The Rue Morgue". This makes me nostalgic for my high school days back in the mid 80's when I listened to equally heavy doses of punk and metal. Those days are long gone, but enough of these infamous old songs live on and shine through on this fine compilation. (JC)

(PROBE/PO BOX 5068/PLEASANTON, CA 94566)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "Punch-Drunk" CD

Acheap(ish) label sampler from TKO, one of the superior - certainlyjudging by this offering - 'street-punk' labels around today. While I find

much of this new skinhead/streetpunk affectation frankly laughable, TKO seem to have scooped up the cream of the crop. A fine selection of tracks from the



likes of WORKIN' STIFFS, DROPKICK MURPHYS, REDUCERS SF, LOWER CLASS BRATS, PRESSURE POINT, RANDUMBS, SWINGIN' UTTERS, PETER AND THE TEST TUBE BABIES and more. (RK)

(TKO RECORDS/PMB #103, 4104 24TH STREET/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94114)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Punk's Not Dead: A Tribute To The Exploited" CD

From the liner notes, you'd think that the EXPLOITED were at the forefront of political punk activism. The EXPLOITED were about the worst



thing that ever happened to punk - an embarassing caricature, steeped in violence, ignorance, racism and stupidity. And the music was always mediocre at best. Actually, some of the bands here almost make the EXPLOITED sounds not bad. Me and Wattie lived in the same city - Edinburgh - for 10 years. Apparently, he wanted to kick my ass for suggesting that the EXPLOITED were a waste of electricity. I guess he never realized we lived around the corner from each other for at least 4 years. Countless bands did - and do - it better. (RK)

(RADICAL RECORDS/77 BLEECKER STREET, #C2-21/New York, NY 10012)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Punk Ass Generosity" Double CD

2 bands, mainly of the more melodic/pop-punk variety donate tracks for a benefit compilation. And therein lies the frustration. It's a great comp, with some superb bands on it - BRACKET, DIGGER, ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN, HORACE PINKER, LAGWAGON, LES STITCHES, MANDINGO, NO

FUN AT ALL, NO USE FOR A NAME, PINHEAD CIRCUS, PROPAGANDHI, THE TANK, TEEN IDOLS, 30 FOOT FALL etc etc. But there is no information on it all.



No info on the bands, on their tracks (whether they are unreleased for example), or what causes "all the profits" are going to. The music kicks ass though, with a consistency impressive over two discs. (RK)

(DEVIL DOLL RECORDS/PO BOX 30727/LONG BEACH, CA 90853)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "Revenge Of The Killer Crash Helmets" CD

Retch are doing a fine job of unearthing some of the nuggets from 80s Britpunk. This more recent sampler of the label's current catalog includes



gems from ENGLISH DOGS, CULT MANIAX, SANITY ASSASSINS, PARADOX UK, INSANE, VARUKERS, BLITZKREIG and more. Some classic bands give it a welly! (RK)

(RETCH RECORDS/49 ROSE CRESCENT/WOODVALE, SOUTHPORT, MERSEYSIDE, PR8 3RZ/ENGLAND)

VARIOUS ARTISTS"Screams From the Gutter" LP

Ok, this here record is a compilation of "Swedish antiracist skinhead and street punk bands". Anyhow, about half of this comp is all right



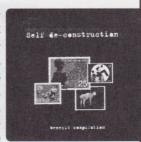
and the rest of it eats a dick; overall, this is not too exciting. My faves are BOOT SQUAD, VOICE OF A GENERATION, and BOMBSHELL ROCKS....I would imagine that BOMBSHELL ROCKS are the US BOMBS of Europe. BOOT SOUAD is more straightforward, mid-tempo

street rock, and VOICE are more punchy and upbeat. (JAW)

(DSS RECORDS/POB 739/4021 LINZ, AUSTRIA)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "Self De-Construction" CD

Afine underground effort
to benefit AntiRacist Action,
Food Not Bombs
and others.
Lavish packaging,
excellent production, and some



choice tracks from the likes of SUBB, YOUTH BRIGADE, I-FARM, ANTI-FLAG, UNSEEN, GRIVER, EQUATION OF STATE, RIPCORDZ and more make this a winner. A \$6.66 price tag should be added inducement to shop. (RK)

(Underworld Records/10738 Av. Millen/Montreal, Quebec, H2C 2E6/Canada)

VARIOUS ARTISTS"Sleazy Listening" CD

Alhough the cover of this compilation boasts "The major league of sleaze & stonerrock", I'm relieved to find the stoner rock



content mercifully limited to a few tracks by 7ZUMA7, NEBULA, and CANDYBAR PLANET. Otherwise there's more straight-ahead, no frills RnR with badboy lyrics (pussy, Satan, blah blah) than you can shake a stick at, being delivered by assorted punkeroos from both the US and Europe, including PETER PAN, GLUECIFER, the HELLACOPTERS, the NOMADS, ATOMIC BITCHWAX, CHROME LOCUST, the FLAMING SIDEBURNS, TUR-BONEGRO, and the SPACE AGE COWBOYS. although the opening track by HELLRIDE is the real winner here. Overall, this soundtrack designed for the hot rod flare crowd is a little inconsistent, but still a pretty good effort from a new Dutch label. (TS)

(SUBURBAN/NO ADDRESS)

REVIEWS

VARIOUS ARTISTS"Sons Of Yma" CD

Avery cool complete of 1960s garage bands from Peru!! I'm a sucker for weird interpretations of American or English garage classics, and



some of these bands mutate song by the SEEDS, ? and the MYSTERIANS, KINKS, MERRY DRAGONS, SORROWS, and even LED ZEPPELIN! My fave on this is the crunching heavy psych song "Destruction" by TRAFFIC SOUND, followed closely by the two cuts by Los SAICOS, which border on complete insanity. (AW)

(YMA/NO ADDRESS)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Straight Outta Burbank, Bomps 25 Years Behind The Music And Introducing Alive And Total Energy Records" Double CD

The lengthy title is fitting for a label(s) with such a rich and influential past present and future. Being home to (at least temporarally in



some cases) one of the most amazing rosters in punk history. The GERMS, DILS, ZEROS, DEAD BOYS, IGGY POP, WEIRDOS, SWELL MAPS, U.S. BOMBS, PINK FARIES and the list goes on and on. All the classics and current rock and roll masters like STREETWALKIN' CHEETAHS, LAZY COW-GIRLS and PUSHERS. Lots of great songs that sparked my teenage memories making me go "Yeah that song, I used to love that song" on tracks like "1x2x3 Devastated" by DM3 or Kim Fowley's "Face In The Factory Mirror". It even delivers some really cool, more experamental tracks by avant geniuses like The DEVIANTS, JOHN SINCLAIR and the mighty SUN RA. All in all an amazing collection and certainly essential for the rock 'n'

roll fanatics like me and you. (JC)

(BOMP/PO BOX 7112/BURBANK, CA 91505)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "That Was Now, This Is Then" CD

Various heroes of today cover 77 classics by the likes of the REAL KIDS, WEIRDOS, WAYNE COUNTY, DAMNED, ONLY ONES, JAM, the SAINTS, the



CLASH, EATER, RADIO BIRDMAN et al. Most of the covers - from the likes of SHOWCASE SHOWDOWN, DILLINGER 4, TEEN IDOLS, MIGRAINES, LESS THAN JAKE, BORIS THE SPRINKER are pretty straight (and good they do cover, after all, some great songs), with only HICKEY (giving the AVENGERS a good doing) and MORAL CRUX (giving the CLASH a more 'modern' rendition) adding anything to the originals. If you like the old dudes, or these young upstarts (many of whom could barely have been alive when the originals appeared!) you'll most likely appreciate this. (RK)

(LIBERATION RECORDS/PO BOX 17746/ANAHEIM, CA 92817)

VARIOUS ARTISTS That Which Does Not Kill You

Three bands from CT.- BRO-KEN, REACT, & BOILING MAN laying down hard core punk rock as you would expect to hear from the east coast, just



not from this decade. Reminiscent of the great late '80's CRUMBSUCKERS, AGNOSTIC FRONT-style punk rock. As one who knows me might assume, I feel BROKEN take the cake here, as they have been one of my favorites since the first time I heard one of their songs, yet I found the other two bands not only complimentary, but quite enjoyable.

Open your mind, explore new bands, check this out. (BAM)

(ELEVATOR/PO Box 1502/New Haven, CT 06511)

VARIOUS ARTISTS"The Bay After" CD

Abunch of LA area bands -98 MUTE, SMUT PEDDLERS, FCP, DEVIATES et al pretty badly maul and fuck up some classics by BLACK FLAG. CIRCLE



JERKS, DESCENDENTS, REDD KROSS and MINUTEMEN. The worst kind of tribute record. Any kid stumbling onto his who hadn't heard the originals, would presume that BLACK FLAG, DESCENDENTS et al were limp, weak, badly played, derivative garbage. A compelling argument for not attempting cover versions. (RK)

(RAW POWER RECORDS/1636 W. 139TH STREET/GARDENA, CA 90249)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"We Are The People - A Tribute To Angelic Upstarts" LP

remember when I first heard ANGELIC UPSTARTS when I was around 16 and became a fan of their aggress i v e punk/streetrock



sound with intelligent, socially and politically aware lyrics. Many others were influenced by this band, as evidenced by this tribute album where both older and newer punk bands cover the UPSTARTS with great results. You can really tell that these bands, some of whom I'd never heard of before, are real fans, too. In fact, the REBELS' original drummer actually joined the UPSTARTS later on! Some of these bands, like the REBELS, RED LONDON, OPPRESSED and RED ALERT have been around for almost as long as the UPSTARTS have! Other bands on this include LEATHERFACE, KLASSE KRIMINAL, BRAINDANCE, and the ULTI-

MATE, among others. (AW)

(Knockout!/Postfach 10 07 16/46527 Dinslaken, Germany)

VARIOUS ARTISTS"We'll Punk You Up!"

I find such compile a tions intensely annoying. There is no info (other than contact addresses for the bands) about the songs contained herein



- whether they are unreleased, whether they are off particular records etc. This is a real shame, because there are some great tracks on here that I'd love to be able to check out more of. The majority of said bands appear to be Canadian, and despite such drawbacks, manage to belt out some fine, driving punk tunes. BITTER GRIN, and the REAL MCKENZIES (of course) stand out, but this is an above average compilation. Also includes PROBLEM CHILDREN, TURBO ACS, REVENGE OF THE EGG PEOPLE, SPLIT SECOND, SICK BOYS and more. (RK)

(STUMBLE RECORDS/57 LEASIDE DRIVE/ST. CATHERINES, ONTARIO, L2M 4G1/CANADA)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "You Gotta Have Moxie" Double CD

Do we really have to have Moxie? Moxie kind of scares me. Just kidding, I kid 'cause I love. Actually a fabulous collection of 60's obscurities,



running the gammut of Psych-pop, Garage, Rave-up and plain old Rock and Roll. The highlights are far too many to mention from this 54 song 2 cd collection. Brought to you by the same genius (now deceased) that did the "Boulders" series as well as about 15 other great late 70's early 80's garage and punk labels. Essential collection! (JC)

(MOXIE/NO ADDRESS)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Zombie Shake Vol. 1 1/2 Italian Punk 'n' Roll Surf Compilation" 2xLPs

Great "Killed Death" send-up double LP of singles released over the last few years by this label. Lots of styles to choose from. as evi-



denced by the title, by all containing the main ingredient of being rockin' music. Contributions from THE OTHERS, ROYAL KNIGHTMARES, ASSHOLES, WE ARE YOUR PUNX STP, MANGES, HERMITS, CAVE DOGS and the oddly named ORANGE JUICE FROM THE CRYPT, just to name a few. There's more garage-punk attitude on here than you can shake a studded bracelet at. (AW)

(ROCKIN' BONES/VIA CUNEO 2-43100/PARMA ITALY 24H)

VICE SQUAD "The Rarities" CD

Definitely one for the dedicated. A collection of demo and live tracks from the various stages of not only VICE SQUAD's various incarna-



tions (both singers - Beki and Lia), but the various bands that the guitarists and drummer were in before, after and during VICE SQUAD. The quality varies enormously. I never quite understood why this band were so enormously popular. If you've never heard them, track down their first two eps, and avoid their first LP at all costs...it is dire. For better or worse, they were generally considered 'classic' Brit early 80s punk, along with the EXPLOITED, ANTI-PASTI, CHRON-GEN et al. (RK)

(CAPTAIN OI!/PO BOX 501/HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA/CANADA)

VICIOUS RUMOURS "The Best Of" CD

t always raises a smile when CDs are called this sort of thing. If it's a real bestof, it should only be around two tracks! This culls material from



both their LPs and various outings on the later Oi! albums, released in the early 8os. At their best, they were similar to PETER AND THE TEST-TUBE BABIES, both in terms of melodic punk, and the 'humorous' lyrical content. At worst they were, well, just pretty humdrum. Having said that, they blow away most of what passes for 'street-punk' today. Not sure what that says... (RK)

(CAPTAIN OI!/PO BOX 501/HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA/ENGLAND)

VINDICTIVES "Hypno-Punko" CD

The latest instalment of the snotty yet sophisticated pop-punk of the VINDICTIVES. This is a fine release, infused as it is with an



engaging carny/old-time music hall schtick, giving the SCREECHING WEASELesque tunes an added depth and variety. Some inventive guitaring only adds to a great package. I thoroughly enjoyed this, though I seem to have remained impervious to its pulsating, hypnotic beats. (RK)

(COLDFRONT/PO BOX 8345/BERKELEY, CA 94707)

VOORHEES

Ad o m e s t i c release from these veteran UK thrashers. Fans of twisted RUDIMEN-TARY PENI-meets-SPAZZ will love



REVIEWS

this. Supremely well played and produced, with a stellar sound. The Brit power-violence invasion? Lots of sore-throat hollering and yelling. Even with the lyrics printed, I have no idea what the dude is chirping on about.... (RK)

(SIX WEEKS/225 LINCOLN AVENUE/COTATI, CA 94931)

WEAKERTHANS "Fallow" CD

ts about time.
A domestic release of probably the best record of 98. And 99 for that matter.
Comparisons to JAWBREAKER



are often trite, and obvious, but if any band is poised to take their crown, and run with it to even more exalted heights, then this is it. Melodic, powerful, sparse, poignant, melancholy, uplifting, and yes, dare I say it, pure fucking poetry in motion. Incredible musicanship and composition. Get this. (RK)

(SUB CITY/PO BOX 7495/VAN NUYS, CA 91409-7495)

THE WEAKLINGS "Burnt Bridges & Broken Dreams" 7"ep

really don't understand why people like this band. I've seen them rip the fooking roof off the Wagon - once, and once only. Besides that,



they are among one of the most boring muthahumpin' goddamn bands ever! EVERY song is just completely forgettable noise...To top it off, they fucking just masacre "The First Time". (JAW)

(SONIC TONE RECORDS/POB 264/NEWPORT BEACH, CA 92662)

WHIPPERSNAPPER "The Long Walk" CD

Pleasant surprise here, I was expecting more of a generic jock rock record for some reason. This is really good upbeat music in more of



an emo/melodic hardcore vein. My toes were tapping through the whole cd. I especially dug the tight chunky bass playing that bubbled up for most of the record. Compare to LAGWAGON meets LIFETIME. (IC)

(LOBSTER/P O BOX 1473/SANTA BARBARRA, CA 93102)

WHITE LIARS CD

Rather noisy, heavy, riff rock, once again. For whatever reason, I have experienced this disc way too many times. Anyhow, this blows, and



becomes more and more grating as the seconds crawl through each song. Fucking boring shite which borders on metal sludge and garage-rock. Anyhow, yet again, this CD will end up supporting my beer and burrito habit. (JAW)

(NO ADDRESS)

MIKEY WILD AND THE MAGIC LANTERNS

"I Was a Punk Before You Were a Punk" CD

HHMMMMMM! "I Was a Punk Before You Were a Punk" is the first song. It's funny. Is it supposed to be? MIKEY WILD sings about how he was a punk in 1977 and how he saw the SEX PISTOLS blah blah. Way raw,

dirty and primitive songs about dying, chicks., zombies, God etc... Weird and funny, but definitely entertaining. It almost sounds a little

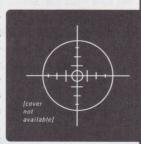


like the FALL to me, if I had to compare, but way goofier, MIKE LUCAS would definately dig this!! It's right up his alley!! (TL)

(Bulb, c/o Surefire/323 Sommerville Ave/Sommerville, MA 02143)

WOGGLES/HILLBILLY FRANKENSTEIN split 7"

Asplit 7" featurfing orthodox 60's garage stompers the WOG-GLES on one side with two songs (one being a COASTERS cover, I believe) that



don't quite live up to material like "Ramadan Romance" or "Don't need your love". HILL-BILLY FRANKENSTEIN take the flip with more of a hard-edged rock sound and female vocals (which sound remarkably like the PRETENDERS in "Raw Bone"). Alright but not essential. (TS)

(SOLAMENTE/124 ST. MARKS PLACE # 2/BROOKLYN, NY 11217)

WORLD/INFERNO FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY

"It's Pumpkin Time" 7"

This is odd. It kind of sounds like a Gospel Choir singing the score to The Rocky Horror Picture Show. This is something new for me. It's definitely not



punk, but it's not altogether unenjoyable. I'm not gonna be throwing this on the turntable very frequently, but it's still pretty

cool. (JER)

(GERN BLANDSTEN/PO BOX 356/RIVER EDGE, NJ 07661)

THE WORTHLESS "I'm Still Having Fun" 7"

First off, these fuckers thank all whores and prostitutes! (Bless their hearts.) THE WORTHLESS play a 90's version of some pretty



fuckin' rockin' 70's style punk. Real snotty-in your face with solid production. "Hey girl you're my ego booster, she's 13 and I just wanna use her!" Awesome! That's how ya get the girls... Obvious influences would probably include U.S. BOMBS and THE STITCHES. Highly recommended. (IR)

(TAANG!/706 PISMO CT./SAN DIEGO, CA/92109)

WRETCH LIKE ME "Calling All Cars" CD

The Blasting Room's own BLACK FLAG, WRETCH LIKE ME are back with their second full length. Literate songs about girls, rocking,



anger, touring and cunnilingus (the unfortunate "Furburger"). As an added bonus, they sample the siren from the beginning of the CLASH's "White Riot"! All in all, a very solid release that doesn't tread too much ground that they hadn't covered on their excellent debut, "New Ways to Fall". If you're a fan of Henry-era FLAG and that heavy Cruz Records-style power-pop, you'll eat this up. And is that WESLEY WILLIS at the end of the last track? (DGJ)

(OWNED & OPERATED/PO BOX 36/FORT COLLINS, CO 80522)

WUNDER YEARS

"Pitstops on the Road Less Travelled" CD

Ayoung Bay band with serious potential. They wear their influences on their sleeves (and in their liner notes, which unfortu-



nately also include an overwrought essay by the band's singer, age 19 - surprise surprise, he passed up college and works at a café). They've got a pop sensibility that belies their years; the singer's got a bit of that latemodel Blake Schwarzenbach thing going on (though he's gonna have to work on his lyrics a bit more to truly merit the comparison). That said, they're miles beyond most of the emo-teen shit that comes my way - if you're a fan of this genre, you could do far worse than keeping an eye out for the WUNDER YEARS.

(TOMATO HEAD/PO BOX 61298/SUNNYVALE, CA 94088)

X-RAYS "Going Postal" CD

Some low-down, murky rock 'n' roll going on here. Pounding rhythms that go to the verge of breaking up, but somehow manage to keep it together. Not quite as cool as the earlier 7" I have from them. This CDtends not to vary enough; it's too much of the same thing throughout. (JC)

(SADDLE TRAMP/PO BOX 5412/NOTTINGHAM, NG1

X-RAYS "Grown Up Drunk" 7"

THE X-RAYS always seem to get my panties wet, so to speak; snotty as fuck, super-lofi production, and sloppy as shit "musicianship" make for a fine record! These guys remind me of MOTARDS, chaoticlly speaking, at times, and no doubt they would be as psychotic live. After you pick this up, check out an awesome record they did a few years back, entitled "Speed Kills".

(KEN ROCK/SKAGGETORP CENTRUM 12/586 44 LINKOPING, SWEDEN)

YOUR MOTHER / BOBBY JOE EBOLA AND THE CHILDREN MACNUGGITS

"Advice For Young Lovers" 7"

Two songs apiece from two talented, twisted bands. YM ends with a wife-beating song, and BJE start with a song about flushing a

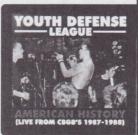


baby down the toilet (it's funnier than it looks in print.) Anyway, pick it up if you're the twisted sense of humor type. (JER)

(SPAM/PO BOX 21588/EL SOBRANTE, CA 94820-1588)

YOUTH DEFENSE LEAGUE "American History" CD

Does anyone really need a live YDL record? A testament to man's monumental ignorance, stupidity and desparation to be British. 15 tracks



recorded in 87 and 88, including an embarassing cover of the LAST RESORT. This isn't really dire, just throwaway rubbish. Badly played wanna be thug rock for the retarded. And what DO these skinheads, who sing on and on constantly about staying true, never giving in, fighting till the end etc etc actually do when they grow out of that particular phase? (RK)

(Vulture Rock/PO Box 40104/Albuquerque, NM 87196)

ZEN GUERRILLA "Trance States In Tongues" CD

When Epitaph slapped me with a promo copy, I played it exactly three times and hated it, but after having seen these guys some 20 times on tour now, I gotta tell ya that ZEN GUERRILLA (with two "R's, and two

REVIEWS

L's") are an AWESOME live band. As a result l've since changed my mind in favor of their noisy but energetic tunes, which are mainly based on blues chord progression tunes and have crazy reverb-ed vocals all over the place. My personal fave tracks are "Black Eyed Boogie" and a cover of DAVID BOWIE's "Moonage Daydream" that's better than the original. (TS)

(SUB POP/P.O. BOX 20645/SEATTLE, WA 98102)

ZEROS "Right Now!" CD

Every so often the ZEROS are forced to get back together due to a combination of popular demand and inner compulsion, and when they do it's always a happy occasion. On this brand new CD they effortlessly crank out a set of their trademark rockin' yet melodic punk numbers. Herein one can find updated versions of some older originals, new numbers, and some well-chosen covers (by, among others, the SEEDS, the SONICS, and the DOLLS), but somehow it all has that cool ZEROS vibe. What's not to like? (JB)

(BOMP/PO BOX 7112/BURBANK, CA 91510)

ZODIAC KILLERS "The Most Thrilling Experience" CD/LP

We got a couple of Hit Listers here, and as much as I'd like to trash this - not only because it would be funny, but also for some of the reviews of my stuff that have come from these guys - it just can't be done. This is one of the best punk rock and roll records I've heard in quite some time. Greg Lowery and JAMI WOLF team up with a couple of locals and take you on a trashed out, petal to the metal, balls to the wall, punk rock ride to the insane side. Proving less is more, and punk might actually be dead, but it's still fun to poke with a stick, this is a must have for rockers and punks alike. (BAM)

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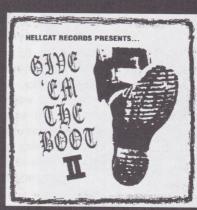


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